THE HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION

EDITED BY C. K. OGDEN

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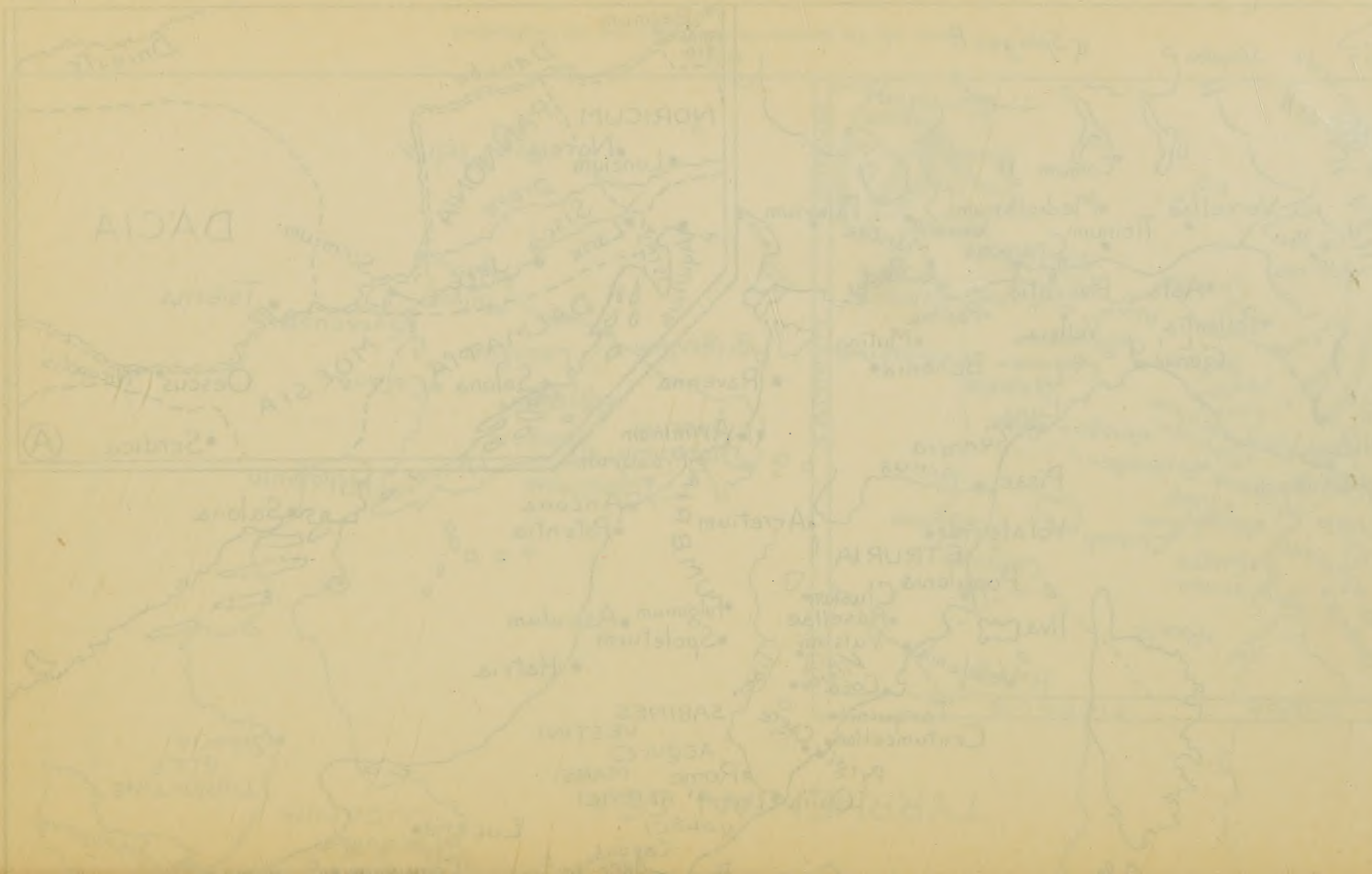

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Pisaurum
Volaterrae
Arretium
UMBRIA
Ancona
Potentia
Salona
ETRURIA
Populonia
Clusium
Rusellae
Fulginium
Asculum
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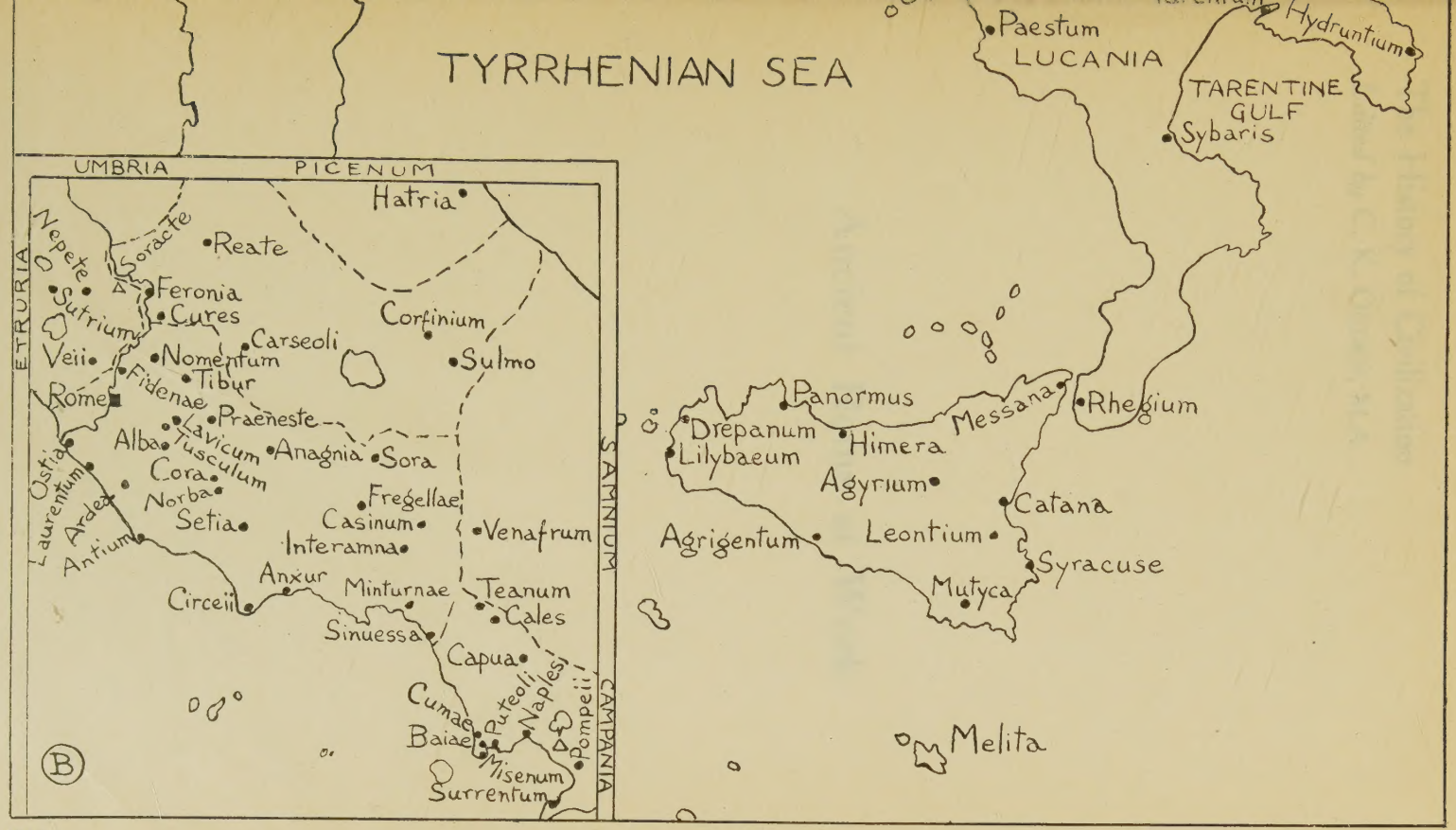

MAP I

ITALY.

INSETS.—(A) The Danubian Provinces.—(B) Latium and Neighbourhood.

[*front.*

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The History of Civilization

Edited by C. K. OGDEN, M.A.

Ancient Rome at Work

The History of Civilization

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Ancient Rome at Work

An Economic History of Rome
from the Origins to the Empire

By
PAUL-LOUIS

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LIFE AND LABOUR IN ANCIENT ROME

FOREWORD

THIS book covers a period of nearly twelve hundred years; that is to say a very wide period of known history and of the progress of mankind so far as it can be traced. It will carry the reader from the far-away ages of primitive industry and pastoral life to the organized labour of the late Empire.

Although the subject is a particularly attractive one, in that it relates to a people from which, more than any other, European civilization is derived, there were grave difficulties of documentation. The assertions and explanations which this book contains are not based on the precise data to be found in other works. Labour at the time of Royal, or even of Republican, Rome, cannot be studied with the certainty of analysis and the wealth of information which can and should characterize the contemporary phase of textile or metallurgic development. Really trustworthy sources are for the most part lacking and figures are rare and open to question. But the very obscurity which envelops the life of these early epochs is an added attraction to research and a spur to the curiosity of the historian. When he finds in some text a clue to the right path he is as happy as an archæologist who has wrested from the strata of the Forum or the hard ash of Pompeii a new inscription or a precious cup.

The documents are not, however, negligible or inconsistent but they are scattered and need interpretation.

We are accustomed to-day to methodically presented statistics, which, even if they do not always satisfy our desire for rigorous exactness, can at least be used as a reliable basis for investigation. Antiquity, however, has given us no statistics in the sense of sets of values which measure public wealth, the activities of a country, or the mutual relations of two peoples at any given period. We know some of the census figures of the Republic, but they are found scattered throughout the works of historians, and their general trend escapes us. We know that great work was done by the official geometricians under Augustus, but it was not preserved. There is nothing in the documents to which we have access, which can be compared with the annual tables issued by modern States of their agriculture, industry, trade, navigation, or their fiscal revenue and expenditure; moreover, it is worthy of remark that these tables are essentially of contemporary origin and that many of them are imperfectly conceived—thus we still do not possess circumstantial and reasoned reports concerning the general scale of wages in England, France, or Germany.

It would seem that the successive governments of Rome at no time felt the necessity of studying at first hand the conditions of existence of the masses, although such a study was doubly interesting in a country in which the public treasury provided subsistence for hundreds of thousands of people. Even regarding the organization of the *annona*, which affected so closely the life of the proletariat—in Rome at first and later in both Rome and Constantinople—our information is incomplete and sparse. The famous edict of 301, which gives us information as to the cost of food and wages, can hardly be regarded as a very valuable document. At the most it lays down maxima and it is necessary to add that these maxima have been very differently interpreted by those who have attempted to express in the money of our time the values laid down by Diocletian.

Whilst official statistics are almost completely lacking, unofficial statistics are not more copious or more conclusive. The historians of the future, when dealing with the economic movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, will be able to borrow largely from the reports which the law requires joint-stock companies to furnish. Yet, although the companies formed by the publicans for the exploitation of the mines and the public lands or for the collection of taxes were operated on a share basis, we know practically nothing of the profits which were derived. At the most, we learn from third persons that the profits were considerable and often scandalous.

The ingenious—and, for us, the fertile—idea of filling gaps left by the negligence of public administrations or of associations by preparing annual or decennial summaries of statistics did not apparently occur to any of the ancients ; this need, however, cause little surprise when we consider that the patient writer who might have assumed this task would have met with terrible difficulties. Alone, he could not have carried out even a fraction of the investigations which the staffs of the public offices of the time or the employees of the great financiers shrank from attempting. For many reasons, too, statistical researches were incomparably less fruitful in their results eighteen or twenty centuries ago than at the present day. The nature of the market, the inferiority of free labour, the universalization of slavery, the comparative absence of trade, the paucity of world production, and the small range of demand—all these contributed to lessen the importance of studies to which, especially during the last fifty years, we have assigned first-rate significance.

In the face of this penury of official records, it may well be imagined how thankless is the task of anyone setting out to describe Roman society at work with any degree of accuracy. For the period of the Kings reliable sources are practically non-existent, and they are but scanty for

that of the end of the Republic and of the Empire. The indecision in which we are left by texts handed down from generation to generation is faithfully reflected in the contradictory theses which have been extracted from them. For instance, in the question of the population of the Eternal City the authorities who have endeavoured to establish the total at any given time have always been met by others ready to prove them wrong, and from every side the best of arguments have been brought forward as a basis for the most divergent conclusions. When it is considered that we do not know to within something like half-a-million the number of inhabitants crowded together in the capital, it will the more easily be understood that we are without trustworthy particulars of the population of other large towns of the Roman world, such as Neapolis (Naples), Capua, Mediolanum (Milan), Aquae Sextiae (Aix), Narbo (Narbonne), or Carthago Nova (Carthagena). Unlike ourselves, the ancients did not tend towards mathematical exactness, and were thus indifferent to a hiatus in knowledge which tantalizes and irritates us at the present day.

As most of the census returns were lost, and as in any case they had always been localized, we cannot estimate the number of free men without running a very large risk of error.

Even less, if possible, do we know the number of slaves. Yet, in order to establish and define the part played by servile labour before and after the Punic wars, under Augustus and Constantine, reliable estimates would be essential. Moreover, the sale price of an adult and industrially serviceable captive would furnish a valuable factor for calculations, and one with which we could compare the price of certain manufactured articles, and thus arrive at some useful conclusions. Unfortunately in this matter, as in all others, nothing that can be legitimately called statistics has come down to us.

It is only by collating the scattered fragments of information given by the authors whose works have been preserved for us that it is possible to undertake a study of labour in the Roman world.

The assistance of the historians is at times extremely valuable, but they show for the most part that economic problems did not interest them. They concern themselves much more with diplomatic negotiations, battles, and conspiracies than with commercial relations or technical developments. They scorn figures and their chief concern is to put into the mouths of their characters eloquent speeches constructed according to orthodox rules.

The agronomists give us very detailed information regarding the systems of agriculture at various periods, but none of them has left us a table showing the ownership of land, a synopsis of production, or an insight into rural labour. They preferred to offer practical advice rather than to calculate the average extent of holdings or the value of the wine or olive yield. They have given us the results of their personal experience rather than impersonal descriptions.

The authors, geographers, men of learning and others who have given us accounts of their travels, essays on the customs of various peoples, on the working of mines, on fisheries, or on caravan routes, have combined truthful narrative with manifestly exaggerated or false assertions. They have failed, as often as not, to distinguish legend from reality. Pliny the Elder, after having given us most useful information regarding processes in metal-working or in the manufacture of glass or paper, entertains us with accounts of mythical beings who combine the attributes of men with animal characteristics.

In spite of all, by combining these factors and adding others which are, for instance, furnished by Cicero's letters and speeches at the bar, by the purely literary works of the authors of the Augustan age, and by the inscriptions scattered

throughout the portions of the globe into which the Romans penetrated, it is possible to link up a series of economic phenomena, ranging from the time of Romulus to that of Theodosius. Reservations are necessary in connexion with certain assertions and care must be exercised in respect of affirmations which are too precise and may prove to be forgeries, but it is possible to perceive the evolution of labour throughout these eleven and a half centuries, to discern the intensity of the current of production and exchange which began and ended in Rome and to observe in its various aspects the economic activity of a people whose sole occupation for a very long period was warfare, yet who had to satisfy the increasing needs of a civilization which ever grew more complex. In this volume, an attempt will be made to present some general views and to put together such matters of detail as we have been able to glean. In refraining from making certain pretentious and seductively brilliant generalizations which would, however, rest on but slender or unsure supports, it has been our desire to register an act of good faith.

ANCIENT ROME AT WORK

INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH the period which we have to consider here is relatively wide, and the cycle of events to which we shall refer is one of the most complex which have existed, the Roman world shows in the successive phases of the organization of labour the same continuity and unity as characterize its general history.

The logic of evolution is no less striking in this domain than in all others. The rare and unquestionable beauty of Roman law and that element in it which makes it even to-day the most vigorous of mental disciplines are due to the simplicity of its development, the fecundity of every principle once it had been admitted and the skill of the jurisconsults in deducing from these principles their extreme consequences. The strictness of the rules of deduction is only equalled by the clarity of the basic affirmations. Confusion, incoherence, obscureness and intrinsic contradiction were never tolerated by the practical Romans, who disdained the virtuosity of the rhetoricians. Similarly, in following age by age the forms of labour in the continually expanding society of Rome, and in studying the changes which these forms imposed upon public and private life and the reactions caused by incidents apparently far removed from any connection with economics, one is obliged to admit that arbitrary or chance events played but an infinitely small part in the transformations which came about. Everything is capable of explanation, is a link in a chain. Mystery is unknown, reasons are manifest and irrefutable.

It is no mere freak of fate that the *latifundia* made their appearance at a given moment and presented one of the greatest social problems which a people has ever been called upon to solve ; a series of legislative measures which coincided with definite events had brought about the expropriation of the small farmers in favour of a privileged class

and these very *latifundia* which nothing—not even foreign or civil wars—could abolish had a decisive influence, which grew from age to age, not only upon agriculture but also upon industry, the trade of the Republic and the condition of free and wage-earning workers.

The history of slavery offers a remarkably clear picture of evolution from the exiguous " families " of the earliest times down to the great herds of captives penned in the domains of Lucania or Sicily in the first century preceding our era. We shall see clearly later why this slavery became less brutal at the end of the Empire, why it terminated in the " colony " system, the forerunner of serfdom, and bound men no longer to a master but to the soil, and finally why it appeared to the contemporaries of Diocletian and Constantine as a deplorable system of exploitation.

Economists sometimes express surprise that free labour should have played so small a part in the Roman world, whilst besides the slaves a *plebs* of several hundred thousand men inhabited the capital and other *plebes* not subject to the authority of any owner lived in all the large towns under both the Republic and the Empire. But all surprise is removed when one considers the institutions which permitted this proletariat to live in idleness. The *annona*, the origins of which are to be found in the earliest centuries, increased incessantly both in scope and burden and deprived great masses of citizens of any motive for toiling and labouring. Free labour, which however never completely yielded to servile labour, lost its power of resistance in proportion to the ability of the *civis romanus* to live at the expense of the State.

Certain other details, too, which at first sight arouse in us a certain intellectual surprise appear quite logical when we investigate things as they really were. The economic organization of the Roman world cannot be examined in fragments, and is only seen in the strength of its cohesion if one takes it as a whole and relegates to the background the details and shading in order to consider the essential outlines. At whatever moment of development we may take it, we are confronted with a perfect equilibrium of forces, but the regularity of the development from the beginning down to the time of Theodosius is not on that account less manifest nor does it afford us more surprise.

The economic history of Rome, neglected though it has been for so many centuries, is in truth the basis of its political, diplomatic and military history. Nothing can be understood of the events in the city, the internal struggles and the expeditions for purposes of conquest unless the methods of cultivation, the insufficiency of the yield, the smallness of industrial production, the mineral poverty of Italy and the monopolization of land by a minority are also comprehended.

To the fact that Rome had not on her own soil the means of feeding and clothing her population are due her early conflicts with the other peoples of Latium. With weapons in their hands her citizens went forth in quest of fields to till and cattle to tend. But at the same time as she was carrying on war a few miles or a few dozen miles away from her frontiers, men without hearth or home within the city walls were asserting their right to live. They asked for their share in the means of subsistence, for their portion of arable land, and for the political prerogatives which would permit them to break the bonds of their social vassalage and put an end to the encroachments of the aristocracy upon the land.

Later it was the need of cereals that drove Rome to the conquest of territories outside the Peninsula, when she found that Campania, Lucania and Etruria alone could not supply her with the food she required. She must have Sicily, Africa and Egypt—her three granaries which every year had to send her either without payment or at a very low price the many millions of bushels requisite for the satisfaction of her growing needs. Moreover, besides reliable harvests she wished for healthy and roomy territories to absorb the superfluous population of dispossessed and malcontents. She practised colonization from much the same motives as modern states.

All the warlike undertakings which were embarked upon in the period between the first rupture with Carthage and the expedition to Pontus and Gaul are ascribable to the appetites of a plutocracy which continually increased in numbers, strengthened its influence in the Equestrian Order and subordinated the policy of the Republic to its own interests. The campaigns against Macedonia and Syria had brought the Romans into contact with other civilizations and with countries whose products she came more and more to appreciate. The reward of victory in modern warfare is the

conquest of new and wider markets in which organized industry can find an outlet for its huge production. The wars of Rome tended to gain for the capital areas of arable land and zones of agricultural or industrial production to satisfy the requirements of her great central mart; they also provided her, as we shall later see, with enormous contingents of slaves who were claimed by the great families either for domestic purposes or to meet the needs of the manufactures which were beginning to come into existence.

The imperialism of the first century before our epoch, which the Senate was later obliged to a certain extent to resist and of which the Equestrians came to be the propagandists, can be traced, like German, British, American or French imperialism to-day, to economic considerations. The only difference is that these considerations move on different planes. The Romans were concerned, not with selling goods and wresting new sources of production, but with raising direct tribute and confiscating all available wealth.

Despite certain fundamental differences the history of ancient Rome presents at times strange affinities with that of contemporary Britain. The occupation by Augustus of the little canton of the Salassi with its gold deposits in the upper Aosta valley only differs from Lord Kitchener's conquest of the Rand in the 20th century in the one particular that, whereas the Salassi were sold as slaves, the British Conservatives thought it more expedient to assimilate the Boers.

The wars of the Roman Empire will be seen to be wars of defence rather than of aggression even when they appear to bear the character of offensives. Rome had to protect her frontiers against the barbarians who came from the Germanic forests to hurl themselves in vain upon her intrenched camps. She also safeguarded her trade with the East, which sent her yearly great consignments of precious articles—carpets, fine cloths, perfumes, glass and gems—from which her more fastidious civilization could no longer abstain; imperialism lost ground however from the day when the Equestrian plutocracy relinquished their mastery over affairs, and the leaders of the State set up what amounted to a system of permanent arbitration between that and the other classes.

All development in Rome—from the system of land-

holding down to that of the *frumentationes*, from the organization of the magistracies and the regulation of political rights down to the fiscal administration of the provinces, from the conduct of diplomacy down to the grant of charters to the corporations—took place under the influence of economic needs and under the pressure of the changing relations between the social classes. But political history in its turn reacted upon the institutions of labour.

The Roman was rarely creative. Though he saw the advantages of appropriating the ideas of others and utilizing such discoveries as came his way, he invented little or nothing on his initiative. At every generation he reaped the benefits of progress made in other countries. The warlike expeditions which led him into contact one by one with the most diverse peoples and hewed him paths into the whole world, as it was then known, brought with them technical knowledge of all kinds besides territorial conquests, booty and slaves. The manufacturing activity of the city of Romulus at its beginnings was nil and it was the groups of men who from the 7th to the 3rd centuries B.C. fought for the mastery of Italy and the Mediterranean who taught the Romans the rudiments of industry. The influence of the Etruscans, who long dominated the central regions of the Peninsula, that of the Greeks, who founded the flourishing cities of the South and of Sicily, and the more remote influence of the Egyptians were to shake the future conquerors of the world out of their early torpor. From their immediate neighbours, by whom they were at times reduced to submission, from navigators who arrived on their shores, and from the populations with whom they were brought into contact by the need for exchanging goods they were to derive acquaintance with the principles of mechanics and metal-working.

They were to seek in the genius of Greece or of the East and never in their own the simpler developments of tools. The use of money and its substitution for the system of barter and for the calculation of values in units of cattle was also to come from without.

These essential features of Roman economic life are not only typical of its origins but are renewed from century to

century. After the conquest of Greece and the subjection of Macedonia, after the seizure of Asia Minor, whose manufacturing centres gave evidence of activity such as had never been seen before, after the extinction of the last embers of sedition at Alexandria, Rome not only opened her doors to a higher form of civilization and to a more fastidious standard of taste, but she also transformed her industries. Never in the course of history has any victorious nation been so greatly influenced both intellectually and economically by those whom it has conquered. Each new country subjugated brought its share of knowledge to the Romans, and technical progress marched in step with the expansion of their empire.

Nevertheless—and it is the lot of every merely imitative people—the industries of Rome, with rare exceptions, could not successfully compete with those of Asia. The capital of the world fell short of becoming a metropolis of production because its gigantic population found it more expedient to live from the labour of others. The continual conquests rained on her the treasures of kings and the gifts of triumphant generals and thereby removed all motive for methodical effort; agriculture, even more than manufacture, felt the effects of military and political history.

Citizens who had left their fields to go to war and remained with the legions for months together had lost their taste for agricultural work when they were discharged. The soil, abandoned thus at intervals, no longer yielded harvests. Rome then turned to the countries which had fallen under her authority. Everything contributed to discourage the peasant—the competition of grain from Sicily and Africa, and later from Egypt, the enormous supplies of cereals which were sold by the public authorities at prices all the lower in that the original cost was little or nothing, the certainty of not being able to derive a living from sowing and harvesting and the lack of a sense of security which was the result of too numerous civil wars. The neglect of wheat cultivation in favour of that of the vine and the olive and of bird-breeding, which set in with the 3rd century B.C., and the fact that at a later date the countryside was deserted by its inhabitants and became covered with pools of stagnant water, were phenomena which, like the constitution of the *latifundia*

themselves, were intimately connected with military expansion.

An unceasing revolution was taking place in the life of the Romans in proportion as the conquests increased. The structure of the world which we are studying was incessantly shaken by the annexations which were being made and which became more numerous than ever in the last two centuries before our era. Between the second Punic war and the battle of Actium the mutual reactions of political and economic history followed one another with an amplitude and precision which we can hardly expect to find paralleled elsewhere. The expansion of Rome across Europe, Africa, and Asia cannot be explained if we leave out of account the material requirements of Rome and the peculiarities of her class struggles; her agricultural and industrial transformations can only be traced to their root causes by continual reference to the progress of the legions on the march and to the creation of proconsulates.

Unlike Greece, Rome realized unity of rule, and this fact dominates the whole history of her production and trade. The Hellenic cities were at war with one another and none of them became the capital of a real State—none seized the national market either by drawing its requirements from the Greek-speaking world or by imposing upon that world its fabrics or bronzes. The divisions of rival political parties led to a dissipation of strength and to commercial competition which nothing could lessen. The Macedonian Empire did not last sufficiently long to break down the barriers which kept the conquered peoples apart. The world of Rome, on the other hand, although without unity of language, without uniform customs and requirements and without a general level of civilization, obeyed a common impulse, bent before the same supreme power and was administered on lines which hardly differed in Spain, Cilicia, Egypt, or Noricum. All authority emanated from the central source which was the focus of all institutions. At the end of the Republic the tax-farmers extended the range of their exactions throughout the provinces, for they were protected and feared by the governors. Under the Empire, the privileged and statutory

corporations were to be found from Lyons to Capua and from Arelate to Constantinople, with the same charters, the same immunities, the same solemn rites and the same public obligations.

The scattered Greek world existed side by side with other worlds which failed to attain a degree of civilization at all comparable with hers and had much to learn from Greece even if Greece had something to learn from them. The Roman world ended by including all known groups of men. It absorbed everything. For her own purposes Rome constructed roads which crossed the Caledonian mountains, the Germanic forests, the Batavian marshes, the Cantabrian Pyrenees, the deserts of the Syrtes and the sands of Arabia. These roads, which still remain to bear witness to the greatest human power which has ever arisen, were used not only by the legions but also by the caravans which brought tin from the Cassiterides, amber from the Baltic, and perfumes from Upper Syria. For Rome, humanity laboured, toiled in the mines, wrested fine pearls from the sea, netted the purple-fish which supplied the precious dye, wove the wool of Asia Minor, blew the glass of Egypt, and smelted Thracian iron and Cyprian copper. For Rome, gangs of slaves threshed corn in the plain of Palermo, upon the plateaus of Numidia and along the damp banks of the Nile; for Rome, ships ploughed the seas from India and even from China and the Somali coast to the misty littoral of the Veneti and to the Cimbric peninsula. Rome was more than a capital, she was supreme arbiter of the activities of the universe. Her requirements were law. To satisfy her, nations sacrificed their tranquillity and united their efforts ever more closely. A whole economic system grew up, consolidated and perfected itself in order to supply Rome as cheaply and as rapidly as possible with the delicacies which her plutocracy demanded and with eatables for the less exacting palates of the vulgar. At no period have we seen a repetition of this phenomenon of millions of people thus dependent upon the caprice of a single city. Not one of our modern capitals—not London, Paris, or New York—has ever controlled to any comparable extent the labour of peoples or subjected so completely to the service of its own needs the interests of such huge populations. The spectacle of Rome as a political

metropolis is only paralleled by that of Rome as an economic metropolis.

But whilst this prodigious city was exercising its power of absorption and drawing into its own organism the resources of the world whose centre it was, Rome was giving back in her turn and shedding upon the world the wisdom, the doctrines, and the wealth which she had seized and accumulated. There grew up between Rome and the provinces an unceasing exchange of ideas and of commodities. The same administrative system came into being from one frontier to another, and along the paved arteries used by the legates a single economic and social system and uniform methods of organizing labour were established in the utterly dissimilar countries which fell from age to age within the sway of the great *Pax Romana.*

The outstanding characteristic of labour in antiquity is slavery. It is, however, by no means the only one and others will force themselves upon our attention as our study advances; but it is slavery which supplies, as it were, the key to all the other main characteristics. It took on the features of universality which were later to typify serfdom and to-day characterize the wage-earning classes. Slavery was no accident; it was the resultant of the mass of ideas current in Rome as in Greece and in all the societies of antiquity from Gaul to Egypt and from Germany to Carthage. The Romans did not propagate the system, but found it already organized in the numerous countries which they visited and conquered. They had no difficulty in basing their whole economic system upon this institution because it was everywhere established and recognized.

Where a man's right to kill or mutilate his beaten foe was claimed and conceded, the right to force him, once disarmed, to labour unremittingly followed *a fortiori.* Servitude was regarded as a commutation or a reduction of penalty. For many centuries it did not occur to anybody that to enforce bondage was to commit an abuse of power and an offence against the person, to do monstrous violence to a civilization which professed to be refined to the point of fastidiousness. Like the Spartiates and the Athenians, the Romans only

allowed the conceptions of liberty and equality to hold good within the narrow limits of a society composed of citizens and masters.

The principles of humanity, it was felt, had been sufficiently observed when, instead of putting captives to the sword or crucifying them, their captors threw them into the slaves' prisons, the *ergastula*, or drove them to labour on the great estates.

The growth of the servile population and the undoubted influence which it exercised upon the evolution of the Roman economic system began on a large scale after the Punic wars. So long as Rome only encountered peoples who had a common origin and whom it was advantageous to win to the Roman cause by leaving intact their civil liberties, slaves were comparatively few. Moreover, the formation of large gangs of workers, driven by the whip, would have been dangerous as long as the free element of the population was small and the country remained enclosed within clearly-defined frontiers. The vanquished were however to be enslaved in their tens of thousands during the second and first centuries B.C., in the course of the Macedonian, the Asiatic and the Gallic wars; Caesar brought back with him enormous contingents, whose industrial and agricultural value was highly esteemed.

If labour was not held in great consideration in the societies of antiquity, the reason is to be sought in the fact that it appeared to be reserved for slaves. And the very disdain in which it was held generally and by the greatest writers helped to reduce the numbers of free craftsmen and to stimulate the recruitment of slaves. But this uninterrupted recruitment which was effected without difficulty from the beginnings of Rome until the middle of the Empire, was made from human material of the most varied ethnical types, with the result that the masses of industrial and agricultural labour were formed of contingents of very unequal value. This was, in any case, only one of the minor defects of the system.

The system was onerous, for however badly the slaves might be fed and clad—and we shall see later how Cato the Elder recommended that they should be treated—their master, after paying the purchase price, was obliged to keep

them sufficiently nourished to work. Unless he were prepared to sacrifice their productive capacity he was obliged to give them their daily allowance of food, even though momentarily he might have no work for them to perform. The worker of the 20th century is never free from the fear of being unemployed, but a general unemployment due to a decrease of world demand never threatened society in antiquity. Over-production was unknown since there was no machinery which would have rendered it possible. If by chance there were a shortage of labour in a given district or if civil war had paralysed agriculture or the manufacture of fabrics or of vases, the slave-owner alone suffered. He failed to recoup himself for the expenses which he was obliged to incur.

The slave system had many other disadvantages, even if we ignore those of a purely moral nature. Not only did the slave become ultimately aged and exhausted and unable to produce the value of his keep, not only did mutiny become the more threatening as the number of labourers penned in the great estates increased, but slavery was essentially contrary to the division of labour. To be sure, the small field of knowledge and the primitive simplicity of manufacturing processes hardly tended to engender that distribution of labour which is the basis of modern industry, but such a division was in any case incompatible with the dominant institution. In order to keep employed the Greeks, Syrians, Scythians, and Germans brought in the markets of Delos, Athens, and elsewhere the owners used them indifferently for all purposes, transferring them continually from one task to another. Thus, long before America in the 19th century reached the same conclusion, the Roman world discovered that servile labour in spite of its apparent economic advantages was both onerous and unproductive. It was from the recognition of this fact that the development resulted which began at the end of the Republic and grew throughout the Empire with its two most significant features—the grant of manumissions and the formation of a class of colonists.

Free labour never disappeared. Restricted though it was at certain epochs, when the victorious generals were bringing back 50,000 prisoners at a time, it persisted never-

theless. Doubtless throughout the period of history which we are relating here its part remained a secondary and accessory one and was never brilliant or decisive. But, in the same way as the small rural holdings, crushed almost out of existence by the *latifundia*, re-asserted themselves nevertheless from time to time, the class of craftsmen also had its returns of prosperity. Its tradition is almost continuous from the old guilds of Numa down to the barbarian invasions at the end. By prodigies of patience and skill, supported, it is true, by the public institutions, it was able to avoid irreparable ruin. It was ever present in the background, masked as a rule by the great army of bondsmen in the cities and countryside alike.

That it survived at all shows that slavery could not satisfy every demand. The free craftsman was practically beyond the reach of competition in the practice of the arts, in making articles of luxury and in working precious materials. His clients were found among the citizens who, although well-to-do, were not sufficiently rich to instal in their homesteads the innumerable industries which the complicated civilization of the age of Sulla and of Caesar needed for its existence. The craftsman class, which had prospered in the first centuries and was later almost submerged under the influx of prisoners from Europe and Asia, finally escaped the dangers which threatened it. Under the Empire it even progressed and reconquered the handicrafts from which it seemed to have been driven out. Wars became less frequent, peace extended throughout the world and the supply of bondsmen from raids on the frontiers increased less fast than before ; moreover, manumissions were swelling the ranks of free labour. The controversies which arose between jurisconsults regarding the hire of labour, the edict of Diocletian and other documents prove that there was no lack of wage-earners whether paid by the piece or by the hour. Finally, the severe regulations which were imposed upon the guilds of butchers, bakers, masons, watermen and others show that the smaller industries and trades occupied the attention of the public authorities. How could the latter have felt called upon to facilitate and foster these activities if they were useless to the State, if they had fallen into decay and if the machinery of the slave system had sufficed to assure the working of every

part of that great body over which the Emperors held sway ?

The relative importance of manufacture and commerce in the Roman world must not be exaggerated. Agriculture no longer occupies the first place in our modern societies, which derive the majority of their resources from the manufacture of raw materials, from the transport of the finished products and from their distribution throughout the two hemispheres. But in antiquity agriculture never ceased to be the most widespread and the most honourable form of human labour, just as arable land was always the most honourable form which riches could take. At first, the landed proprietor who possessed a few acres and kept a few head of cattle upon the common estate—or later upon his private demesne—could provide for all his personal needs and those of his family and his *clientes*, or could at least keep down purchasing and bartering to a strict minimum. Both industry, infinitely restricted in its scope, and trade were subordinated to the cultivation of the soil. The holding itself generally furnished clay, sand and wood, and, when it was necessary to have recourse to neighbouring estates, exchanges in kind procured what was required. The economic system was at first purely domestic, every man living on his own field ; it became in turn urban, then inter-urban, Italian, and finally international, but agricultural labour never ceased to be considered as the most honourable and the most indispensable form of work. The supreme solicitude of the Emperors was that which the Gracchi expressed in their famous laws—the maintenance of a numerous rural population able to feed itself and the inhabitants of the capital. In the eyes of the consuls, the senate, the tribunes of the people, the magistrates of various degrees and of the monarchs and their officials the question of subsistence, which is above all the problem of the yield of the soil, was the most important of all governmental questions. At the time when property became concentrated in the fewest hands and the number of rural inhabitants decreased, in the 2nd century B.C., and again when the insecurity of the countryside precipitated a further exodus of peasants in the 3rd century A.D., the State seemed

in danger, and, indeed, the logical order of things was broken. The Roman world did not at any time offer the spectacle of contemporary England and Belgium, and even at the end of its history riches expressed otherwise than in terms of land were but vaguely taken into account. Industry and commerce, even when they had made great progress and had to some extent become detached from their rural origins, could never rival agriculture in volume or prestige. A whole lineage of Roman agronomists devoted their energies to propagating better methods, but no industrial expert ever to our knowledge took the trouble to record his methods. These two facts indicate the distance separating the ideas of antiquity from those of our days. We have reversed in favour of manufacturing production and of trade the order of things which for centuries operated to their detriment.

It is not difficult to explain the preponderance of agriculture and its almost exclusive sway under the Kings, the Republic, and the Emperors alike. Its ascendance, in no way abnormal in itself, was the inevitable result of the conditions of the times.

It was not possible for antiquity to achieve the intense industrial production which hardly came into being until the 19th century. Its resources were few and its equipment restricted. Machinery had not then to any appreciable extent supplemented the human arm and human muscular effort, nor had the forces of nature been tamed and harnessed. Although the technical processes employed during the centuries which we are studying may have developed, their development remained within rigid bounds. The inventions of Archimedes and of the Alexandrians, useful though they were, had but little influence on manufacture. Statements that the ancients knew the principles of certain discoveries which our own age has turned to wonderful advantage are but poorly supported by evidence, and in any case their knowledge would seem to have remained in the domain of theory, for it was hardly ever applied. Even though the ancients were not ignorant of mechanics, they were unaware of those factors which revolutionized the workshop at an epoch much nearer to our own and indefinitely multiplied our manufacturing capacity.

We can therefore well understand that the cultivation of the land was their main interest and that their learned

men devoted their chief attention to the improvement of the soil, the reclaiming of marshes and the irrigation of arid regions; moreover, there are other explanations of the mediocrity of their industries.

The modern nations which are most active in manufacture are those which have the greatest density of population and find in the domestic market the chief outlet for their production. Still more, in the times of antiquity, was a compact population the first condition of any energetic and sustained work of transformation. Yet, although the investigations of historians and statisticians on this point have not led to identical results and in consequence controversies have arisen and some doubts still remain, it is none the less evident that the Roman world never knew such density of population as we can show to-day.

According to Beloch, at the time of the invasions of Hannibal, Central Italy only counted 29 inhabitants to the square kilometre (74 per square mile), Southern Italy 13 (34) and the average for the peninsular was about 21 (55). At the death of Augustus, 54 million subjects at most lived on some 3,500,000 square kilometres (about 1,367,000 sq. m.), the average density thus not exceeding 16 (42). Even this average was considerably increased by the Oriental Greek population, which, although occupying little more than a quarter of the total area, accounted for more than half of the population. Spain, Corsica, Sardinia, Gaul, the Danubian countries and Africa contributed but a slender share. Only the Delta of Egypt had a density which could be compared with that of modern Belgium or Lombardy. That of the Gallic regions on the other hand did not attain one-twelfth or one-thirteenth of its present figure.

Beloch's figures are admittedly not absolutely proved and his assertions have been contested by other writers who accuse him of under-estimation. It is in any case certain that the ancient world was infinitely less populous than the present-day one. Nor is Beloch, of all the statisticians, the one who has been most moderate in his estimates, for whereas he allots Rome under Augustus 870,000 inhabitants, Dureau de la Malle brings the number down to 562,000, and the latter economist based his calculations upon the import of corn into the capital.

However this may be, whether Rome was no larger than the secondary cities of England and the United States or whether her inhabitants were as numerous as those of London, she had no equal during the centuries which we are studying. She appears to have left far behind her the cities of Carthage and Alexandria with 700,000 and 500,000 souls respectively. The other cities which at the end of the Republic and under the Empire offered favourable conditions for the growth of urban populations were but small towns by the side of ours. We know, too, that the countryside, at the periods when the cities were increasing, showed a persistent tendency to reduce its population.

The conditions were thus hardly favourable to the growth of production on a large scale. There was a lack of demand for goods; rapid means of transport, which would have assured regular intercourse and tended to keep down prices, was non-existent, and indeed only a few cities, the most important of which was Rome, could keep any real manufacturing activity alive. Even when, under the Empire, the rich classes in Gaul, Spain and the Balkans tried to imitate the aristocracy of the metropolis by adopting their luxuries they remained comparatively few. The population of the land bought as little as possible and preferred to manufacture themselves such articles as were required to satisfy their daily needs. One therefore understands why the Roman world does not afford the spectacle of widespread and intense industrial labour; everything contributed to restrict its initiative, to slow down its development and to confine its productiveness within narrow limits.

Capitalism, beyond doubt, was known to antiquity in the form of the concentration of considerable wealth in the hands of persons who derived from it interest, profits and surplus values and by their very wealth dominated the labour market. It mattered little whether labour were servile or free; the proprietors of the *latifundia*, and the shareholders of the great companies which exploited the mines and the forests in the provinces appropriated the fruits of the effort of others. If buying and selling, both under the Empire and under the Republic, were never very active, production for exchange

nevertheless established itself at an early period in the Roman world. The history of money alone suffices to show that this development was very marked and extended from the period which preceded that of the laws of the Twelve Tables down to the fourth century of our own era.

The accumulation of land, of cattle, and of gold and silver coin in the hands of a few families ; the ownership of numerous gangs of slaves—divided sometimes into sections corresponding each to a particular trade ; the regular sale of the work of this proletariat in a growing market ; the methodical increase of certain patrimonies by the various industries thus exercised at a time when each additional slave represented an increase in profits—these are surely some of the characteristics of capitalism.

In order to diminish the importance which this regime acquired in Rome, writers have pointed to the continued existence of the craftsman class, the comparative unimportance of industry and other facts, but in reality such arguments can only justly be adduced to disprove the formation of an industrial capitalism. And when they further allege that apart from the Imperial factories which developed in the second and third centuries A.D. there were hardly any large concentrations of workers, they have still by no means proved the non-existence of large concentrations of wealth or demonstrated that the plutocracy was weak.

The capitalism of antiquity differs, it is true, from our own in the same measure as the distribution of economic forces differs. Then, agriculture held first place and manufacture the third only, whilst commerce and banking provided for the requirements of large numbers of the population. The great fortunes of Rome, both at the time of Cicero and in the century which went before, were made in war or in the colonial exploitation which followed hard upon the conquest of the provinces.

The growth of capital among the ancients took the same forms as it did later, in the sixteenth century with the Spaniards or the Portuguese and in the eighteenth century with the English or the Dutch. We continually find pillage, official looting and the implicit or explicit toleration by the law of the spoliation of property. Unlike our contemporaries, the Romans were unable to conceal by means of secret

speculation the origin of their opulence. A family known to be poor would suddenly rise in the social scale and be inscribed in an honourable place in the census registers because one of its members had played a part in some profitable expedition. Historians have been at pains to record how many thousand pounds of gold and silver were brought back by the victorious generals, how many slaves they had sold and what tribute they had exacted from the vanquished. But not all the money thus obtained by force went into the public coffers. The army commanders, Caesar, Pompey and many others and their immediate following, found their fortunes by a throw of the dice.

Born of violence, capitalism was nourished by usury. Throughout the Roman world traffic in money played an enormously important part and one which must be studied period by period. It is not a mere phenomenon of to-day that private individuals lend money to municipalities and States and that credit establishments have thousands and thousands of people at their mercy. Some of the most important personages did not hesitate during the latter days of the Republic to invest their money at usurious and prohibited rates of interest or to set the entire machinery of the public services in motion to ensure their being repaid. The publicans were not satisfied with earning large sums by leasing the right to collect taxes, to fell timber, or to extract minerals ; they held the provinces to ransom by granting loans at exorbitant rates ; they were certain of being repaid and ready to set new expeditions on foot in order to enlarge the scope of their exactions.

And finally, this financial capitalism exercised its rapine upon the land. In the third century before Christ, the patricians who desired to enclose the public land for themselves were content to profit by the toleration of the magistrates who belonged to the same class as themselves ; they illegally invaded this *ager publicus*, expelling the small commoners and ceasing to pay their dues, with the result that their scandalous audacity provoked reprisals which took the form of the agrarian laws. But at a later date the concentration of estates was achieved by quite different methods. The nobles and knights, enriched by their expeditions in Asia and Africa or in the enterprises which drained the

resources of the tributary nations, bought for nominal prices estates which had depreciated as a result of competition and of the rural exodus. They installed on their lands the gangs of slaves whom they had acquired at the cheapest prices on the morrow of battles and capitalism in its various forms thus established a mastery over Roman society. Its course of evolution is particularly clear when one studies it closely; it begins with the regular spoliations that accompany every victorious war and ends with the commercial and industrial enterprises which developed in the time of Cicero and were maintained during the greater part of the Empire.

At every step history shows us that, side by side with the capitalist aristocracy which seized upon the highest posts in proportion as it monopolized the sources of wealth, there existed a famished proletariat and that this proletariat increased in numbers as the aristocracy tightened its hold. When, in the fourth century B.C., the first patriciate was led to share its functions with the masses of the people, a minority detached itself from these masses and by a rapid ascent to opulence came to constitute a new nobility. At the time of the all-powerful knights—during the second and first centuries, from the Gracchi to Octavius—and in spite of the Sullan reaction which rejected their pretensions there grew up under the Empire an era of influential freedmen. The annals of Rome reveal a series of class conflicts. In every period—and above all in the periods succeeding the Punic wars—a plutocracy and an impoverished mob are to be found face to face. The latter became more and more numerous as they absorbed the slaves liberated by their masters, the country people expropriated from their land and driven towards the capital, and the foreigners drawn into it by the lust of adventure, the desire for social betterment or by mere chance. Free artisans, haunted always by ruin and famine, fell from time to time into this tattered proletariat, which rarely found work for its hands and which the very dearth of industry and the gradual flight from the land forced into perpetual inaction—an unceasing danger to the stability of institutions.

Thus the State, whether its form were Republican or

Imperial, adopted a policy of intervention which grew more energetic with every age. This intervention occurred in all spheres and for a long time seems to have aroused little or no protest.

The individual counted for little in the Roman world. He hardly existed except as part of the collectivity in which he was merged. From the service of the primitive family he passed directly into that of the city. He was obliged to give to the army as much of his time as the magistrates chose to exact. The first constitution bestowed upon Rome was a military constitution. In the period of the Kings, the citizens, tied to the legions, had little time to spend in agriculture or manufacture. The very associations which they were allowed to organize were strictly subordinated to the public interests.

It is because the Romans had at an early date an exalted and respectful conception of the functions of the city and the State that they were but little resentful when this State infringed vested interests. The theory of full economic freedom which found such favour in France at the time of the Revolution and in England in the middle of the nineteenth century took no root in Rome. The intervention of the magistrates continued under a thousand aspects and in the most varied spheres of activity.

The undertakings assumed by the public powers are innumerable and astonish us by the complexity which they sometimes reveal. By means of agrarian laws they changed the distribution of property; by the introduction of the *annona* and the official import of corn they assured subsistence for the citizens of Rome and procured wheat for them at a low price or even free of charge, abolishing thus a whole branch of trade—and that one of the most essential. We find wheat distributed by the officials of the Republic; those of the Empire distributed flour, bread, wine, oil and even meat. By means of the regulations which were applied during the third and fourth centuries A.D. to associations, the sovereigns subjected hundreds of thousands of men to compulsory labour, for no trade was permitted to be inactive; butchers and bakers must work unceasingly, masons build houses and boatmen transport goods. At no other period, perhaps, was intervention pushed so far. Engraving, glass-blowing and the casting of copper became public duties.

The law bound the colonist to the field and confined the cobbler to his booth. Training courses, previously tolerated then forbidden, were rendered obligatory. The callings were made hereditary and gathered together into a powerful and complex organization, a hierarchy of innumerable degrees leading from the almost orientally despotic monarch to the humblest cleaner of the aqueducts.

This State, which took upon itself the duty of more or less controlling industry and commerce, which in order to safeguard agriculture tied the cultivator to the soil, encouraged one branch of production, monopolized a second and restricted a third, which declared itself to be the protector of traders and yet crushed them with taxation, which at one moment prohibited certain forms of expenditure and at another restricted the freeing of slaves, reduced to nothing individual rights, initiative and effort alike. The Roman world of the fourth century, an immense body which life had forsaken, was a ready prey for the invaders. It had become a mere universal bureaucracy, a world-wide machine working on behalf of a caste which was tiny in number and able at most to turn the poverty of fifty nations into wealth for itself. It was no longer anything more than a domesticated flock in which slaves and freemen, artisans and colonists, burgesses and the owners of estates were mingled in a common bondage.

The administrative machine with its innumerable wheels, the gigantic system which provided for the defence of the frontiers and the policing of the capitals, which regulated trade in precious woods, the distribution of oil, the conditions of carpentering, of earthenware manufacture and of house-painting, crumbled under the weight of its responsibilities. And not the least interesting of the studies which the epoch affords us is that of the causes which led Rome to the extraordinary economic system under which the Emperor controlled everything, an organization of associations in ascending order became the main institution and the masses of the people, broken under tyrannical legislation and plunged into incurable misery, did not even dare to dream of emancipation.

PART ONE

FROM THE ORIGINS TO THE PUNIC WARS

753 TO 264 B.C.

IT is natural to adopt the chronological order in following in the Roman world the development of agriculture, industry, commerce, navigation, public works, credit, the monetary system—everything, in short, which constitutes the history of labour ; and nothing is easier than to adopt the usual division into three phases.

In the first period, Rome asserted her domination over the Italian peninsula, which she subjected in a series of armed encounters, and the two extreme dates are 753 and 264 B.C., that of the legendary foundation and that of the beginning of the Punic Wars. This period comprises 244 years under the Kings and 245 years under the Republic.

The second period is from 264 to 30 B.C., that is to say until the triumph of Octavius over Antony, which marks the commencement of the Imperial era. Rome, having conquered Carthage, Macedonia and Syria, and having defeated Jugurtha, Mithridates and Vercingetorix, made herself mistress of practically the whole of the known world.

The third period extends from 30 B.C. to 395 A.D., the date of the death of Theodosius and the definite division of the Empire into two parts, East and West. At first, Rome enriched herself by new conquests under the restored monarchist regime, then her security was threatened by the hordes of barbarians who were assaulting her frontiers and had already penetrated into the majority of the provinces and whose successive invasions were to bring about an unprecedented cataclysm.

The periods of this history of labour are thus divided off by political events, for political events have exact dates, whereas economic developments are rarely marked by salient facts on the surface of things. Their activity increases with their depth. Here, as elsewhere, we shall find them playing a part in the preparation of campaigns of annexation and in civil strife, to find their full development later in the field prepared for them by these varied struggles.

CHAPTER I

PRIMITIVE ROME

NO clear data have come down to us as to the beginnings of Rome. Not indeed that there is any lack of legend, for all the historians of antiquity busied themselves with relating, embellishing and adding to the myths that existed. That of Romulus is hardly an account which satisfies the reason. Are we to believe that a band of brigands established themselves upon a rock which they used as a base from which to rob passers-by? Or that peasants decided to group themselves together for their better protection against possible aggression, choosing as refuges those natural features which offered an easy defence? Did Rome grow from a number of neighbouring family units or out of the fusion of little ethnical groups? Was she at first a stronghold or a trade centre—the site of some kind of market or periodical fair? The problem has little importance in its bearing upon the questions which we are about to study. What is certain is that if the first Romans had brigands in their ranks they were nevertheless for the greater part agriculturists whose fields lay in the neighbourhood of the hills which are to-day more or less levelled by the deposits of centuries and transformed by the labour of generations.

Rome was, at the beginning, a village or, if one prefers, a country town similar to many others of the period. Its value as a site might be questioned in the light of modern ideas if history had not demonstrated the futility of such a controversy. But the men who raised up Rome in the midst of the valleys of Latium, about twelve miles from the sea and from the Alban Hills, never dreamed that they were creating the capital of the world—nor indeed had they any choice.

Rome was the instinctive creation of a people in course of formation. More powerful groups than that which composed Rome in her early years developed in the North and the South. Rome was girt by an immense fan of nations:

the more or less confederated Etruscans with their cities Volsinii (now Bolsena), Clusium (Chiusi), Tarquinii and others, the Sabines hidden away in the Central Apennines, the Vestini, the Marsi, the Aequi and the Volsci in citadels perched on sheer rocks and on peaks standing apart from the main chain : then further away the Samnites, one of the great peoples of the Peninsula. The Tyrrhenian Sea, into which at no great distance the Tiber flowed, did not shield the Romans from foreign incursions. What is marvellous is that they should have subjugated and annexed all the land between the Alps and the Gulf of Tarentum. This first period in their history is not the least curious.

CHAPTER II

THE CONQUEST OF THE ITALIAN PENINSULA

IT would be out of place to discuss here point by point the conquest of the Italian Peninsula. Since we are restricting ourselves to tracing the limits within which the institutions connected with labour developed, we shall merely sketch the chief outlines.

At the time of the first king, Romulus, the Sabines were already associated with the Romans. The third king, Tullus Hostilius, seized in the middle of the seventh century B.C. the important city of Alba, situated at the edge of the volcanic ridge which rises to the south-east of Rome about twelve miles from the Capitol. The fourth king, Ancus Marcius, extended the territory to the sea and founded the port of Ostia.

We do not know how Tarquinius Priscus, who since he came from Tarquinii was an Etruscan by domicile if not by birth, usurped the throne at the death of Ancus. He conquered several small mountainous districts. Tarquinius Superbus thrust back the Volsci and established mastery over the Latin League, in which were grouped the smaller States of Latium.

The Republic, which in 509 succeeded the rule of the kings, had at first many struggles to sustain. An Etruscan chief, Porsena, seized Rome and assured for himself a passage towards Campania, across the Tiber plain. In 506 however he was driven out by contingents from the Greek colonies, who had hastened from the South.

Thenceforward Roman expansion continued with increasing force. In 493, after the battle of Lake Regillus, the consuls placed themselves in command of all the Latin troops. Then, during a century the Aequi, the Volsci and the Etruscans felt the weight of the arms of their bellicose neighbours. Veii, one of the chief cities of Etruria, was taken by Camillus in 395 after a siege which lasted ten years. At this time one

of the darkest episodes in the history of Rome took place—the Gallic invasion of 390.

For nearly half a century the vanquished were occupied in recuperating their strength ; subsequently armed expansion again began, for land had to be appropriated in order to provide subsistence and to occupy the masses of the people, who were incessantly clamouring for the sharing-out of the soil. The first Samnite War lasted from 343 to 341. It was immediately followed by the Latin War, which was waged for the possession of the rich land of Campania. The Latins suffered final defeat in 338 and their League was dissolved. The second Samnite War, marked by the humiliating defeat of the Caudine Forks, was waged from 328 to 312. In 311 the third Samnite War began ; in it the Etruscans, the Lucanians, the Umbrians and even Gallic contingents from the shores of the Adriatic took part—a general coalition was beginning to form against Rome whose ambitions seemed to menace the whole of Italy. It was this campaign of more than thirty years' duration which determined the preponderance of the city of Romulus, for she crushed one by one all the nations gathered against her and when she had finished this round of enterprises the Greek colonies, still populated and flourishing, surrendered to her generals. Among these colonies were Cumae, Dicaearchia, Naples and Paestum. Tarentum, the most prosperous and the most industrially active, whose commerce extended furthest, was the only one of them to remain independent. This city appealed to Pyrrhus, who, after fighting the legions at Heraclea, Asculum and Beneventum, regained his kingdom and left his temporary Allies to their fate. On the eve of the great clash before Carthage, Rome after quelling the new rising of the Samnites, had brought under her authority an area the extent of which we will now outline.

According to Beloch, at the beginning of the Republic the extent of the Roman territories was slightly less than a thousand square kilometres (about 400 square miles), or less than one-sixth of the area of a modern French *département*. In 340, it was 3,096 square kilometres and 6,039 in 328. It rose to 7,688 in 295, and jumped at the end of the period which we are now studying to 27,000, as a result of the incorporation of the Samnian mountains and the fertile

plains of the South. At that time it still represented only about one-tenth of the area covered by the present Kingdom of Italy.

When the Monarchy collapsed, the population, again according to Beloch, comprised 130,000 citizens : the number increased steadily during the first centuries of the Republic, rising to 165,000 in 340 and 282,000 in 264. These statistics, of course, like all statistics regarding Ancient Rome, are contested and are only based upon conjecture. We reproduce them, however, because they have at least a relative value. The 165,000 *cives* of 340 are regarded as corresponding to 500,000 persons of free condition, whose numbers in 264 are believed to have exceeded a million. In the interval the density had fallen from 80 free inhabitants to the square kilometre to 40, and the annexation of the mountainous regions of the Central Apennines was hardly compensated for by that of Campania—although certain regions thereof, it is true, had as many as a hundred or more inhabitants to the square kilometre—and of Southern Etruria, where populated regions alternated with forests and marshes.

CHAPTER III

THE GROWTH OF POLITICAL RIGHTS

ROME was at first, in respect of the development of political rights, nothing more than an agglomeration of *gentes*, that is to say of enlarged families, which included all those who had descended from a common ancestor and honoured the same dead. In his *Cité Antique*, Fustel de Coulanges has laid stress upon this early religious constitution. To the patricians forming the *gens* were subordinated the *clientes*, a kind of serfs who remained under the authority of the father of the family. They lived with him or around him and cultivated the fields in common. The *clientes* never owned the land on which they worked; they did not even own the movable articles with which their cabins were furnished or which were necessary to their work, their *peculium*, or savings, even, could be taken from them, and when the community of the land came to an end their servitude was not thereby lessened; they remained holders, with a precarious title and paying rent.

At the beginning of its history, the city of Rome held the only members of the *gentes*, both patricians and *clientes*; they alone could take part in the common deliberations by sitting in the assemblies of the *curiae* or wards, each ward comprising several *gentes*. These *curiae* were to some extent topographical divisions incorporating religious units.

Heads of families had access to the Senate, the members of which increased in a short space of time from one hundred to three hundred. The Senate served as a council for the King and at his death chose a new sovereign, the office of King being elective and not hereditary.

The weight of all this political machinery, which remained almost unchanged from the time of Romulus to that of Servius Tullius—that is, from 753 to 534—was borne by the masses, an unorganized and despised rabble which had duties but was not permitted rights. This *plebs*, upon the growth of which historians are far from agreeing, seems to

have been composed of very mixed elements. Fustel de Coulanges believes that it was recruited from former *clientes* who had left the *gentes* and from fugitives from neighbouring districts. Bouché-Leclerc considers that the peasants conquered during the reigns of the first Kings were absorbed into it, thus swelling its numbers with some rapidity. Although deprived of all prerogatives, this mass of men soon became a menace to the social order which pressed hardly upon them. The fourth monarch, Ancus Marcius, made an attempt to obtain their help against the Senate and the aristocracy, who were impeding the accomplishment of his plans, but he did not venture to give them political rights repugnant to the spirit of the time. The plebeians, ignored by the ceremonious and rigid civil law of those early ages, could not acquire property, make binding contracts, or even legally marry among themselves. They were not slaves but their condition was hardly higher than that of slaves. They lived outside the people like pariahs, for indeed nothing attached them to the Roman State.

The reform instituted by Servius Tullius, who reigned from 578 to 534, improved their condition. The successive transformations of the common law cannot be passed over in silence, for everything in history is linked up—institutions act and react upon one another and the system of private property is at every stage closely connected with the progress and the decline of the different classes.

With Servius Tullius the plebeians entered into the existence of the city. They were admitted because Rome had become larger, because her ambitions were growing, because she laid claim to wider lands and because, in order to conquer them, she felt the need of increasing her army. Until that time only the *gentes* had carried arms, but their contingent was no longer sufficient. Only by calling upon the plebeians could they be adequately reinforced. The plebeians were enrolled, but they were thereby brought into the nation, for how and why should they defend it if they were to continue to be outcasts? Servius Tullius gave them a country to protect and the principle of the reforms associated with his name lies in this fact; moreover he ingeniously arranged his system so that the poor should not be tempted to reverse the existing political organization. All the inhabitants of

Rome were distributed among four " tribes " and birth ceased to be the only sign of distinction. Nor was religion any longer the essential test in dividing mankind into classes. Nevertheless, men without estates or flocks were regarded with suspicion and the aristocracy of wealth which furnished the cavalry and the most completely equipped soldiers remained in possession of public authority. The few plebeians who had succeeded in amassing wealth entered this plutocracy on an equality with the heads of the *gentes*. The organization—particularly the military organization—which Servius introduced gave the State a new political system constructed on similar lines.

It would perhaps be more correct to say that the military organization gradually grew into a political one. According to Livy the citizens—to the number of 80,000—were divided not only into four tribes according to their domicile, but into seven categories according to the value of their property : the *equites* first and the common people last, the intervening classes being divided into five representing the owners of land valued respectively at 100,000, 75,000, 50,000, 25,000 and 11,000 " asses ", and it should be noted that historians in converting these figures into modern equivalents are far from arriving at the same results. Mommsen regards 11,000 asses as corresponding to forty pounds sterling and Belot puts the figure as high as £224. We can, in any case, state with certitude that Servius drew up a hierarchy of wealth, and that he gave the highest position to those who had most. Of this army transformed into a political assembly, the *equites* and the first class together, with their subdivisions into eighteen and eighty centuries respectively, disposed of ninety-eight votes whilst the other classes and the common people, with its single vote, were reduced to a total of 95.

The numerous researches which have been made into the constitution of Servius have not succeeded in elucidating all the details. They have however made clear to us that Rome was far from being democratically governed in the years which elapsed between the introduction of the reforms and the collapse of the monarchic system. The latter event, which took place in 509, was due to the abuse by Tarquinius Superbus of his personal power in order to oppress the great families. The *gentes* took their revenge and during the

first centuries of the Republic monopolized all the public offices.

It is not our intention to develop here in detail the incessant struggle which took place between the patriciate and the *plebs* for these offices. *De jure* and *de facto* an oligarchy imposed itself upon Rome. The *curiae* and the assemblies of the centuries alike were made to vote as it desired. It kept the magistracies in its hands. The laws were made by it and for it, and the plebeians, deprived of all civil rights, were even ignorant of the legal texts which the judges could apply against them and which remained, except to the nobility, formulae enshrouded in mystery.

It was the economic crises, the periodical famines, the increasing debts and the terrible plight of the debtors which provoked the first political convulsions. The plebeians came to realize that, so long as an aristocratic minority monopolized all authority and confounded the fortunes of the State with its own, the oppression of the masses could only increase.

In 494 they started a kind of secession or general strike. Making their way to a hill—the Mons Sacer or Sacred Mount—near the capital, they announced their intention to form a new city. The Senate took fright, negotiated with the people and, among other concessions, granted them the right of choosing from their ranks two representatives (*tribuni*) with the express duty of championing their cause on all occasions.

The creation of the office of Tribune was the starting-point of a laborious development. The plebeians, now able to count upon the support of one of the most important magistracies, increased their claims. Shortly after the fall of the Decemvirate, which codified the civil laws for the use of all citizens towards the middle of the 5th century B.C., the *Comitiae Tributae*, with a more democratic organization, were substituted for the *Comitiae Centuriatae*.

The Consulate, upon which had devolved nearly all the royal prerogatives—though with this difference that it was shared by two holders and that these holders were designated annually—was subjected to a series of dismemberments, each of which paved the way to the rise of plebeians to public office. They, or at least the richer of them, were able in 409 to hold the position of Quaestor, in 400 that of

Military Tribune, in 366 even that of Consul, of Censor in 351 and of Praetor in 336. At the close of the fourth century the Senate was opened to them, with the result that the old patrician class, subjected to this continued pressure, had lost its former prerogatives. But the plebeian party which had taken away these jealously defended attributes was no more than a new oligarchy, grown wealthy on war, usury and commerce.

Rome, under the Republic as under the Kings, was to remain in the hands of a restricted class, which used its wealth to safeguard its political authority and its political authority to increase its wealth.

Moreover, in proportion as the conquests extended over central and southern Italy, the numbers of the disinherited increased. There were in reality two sets of plebeians, that of the capital being already more favourably treated than that of the country districts of Latium. The Samnites, the Volsci, the Hernici and the Etruscans, expelled from their lands by the victors, were not all reduced to slavery. Many, retaining limited rights, came to Rome. Not being able to vote for the magistrates they were not even able to sell their suffrages. Many, too, within the thousand or so square miles which constituted the domain of the Roman people at the commencement of the Punic wars, remained citizens of their native towns and were subjected to a tutelage varying in its degree of hardship. No political order was ever more complex than this society, forged, as it were, by fire and the sword, in which masses of men to whom fragmentary political rights had been judiciously meted out—in order to ensure jealousy and rivalry between the various factions—were ranged between the aristocracy of the metropolis and the servile army of the first *latifundia.*

CHAPTER IV

CIVIL RIGHTS

CIVIL rights developed at the same time as political rights. To enumerate the successive stages would be to overstep the limits of this book, but the civil law corresponds too closely, during the primitive epoch, to the rudimentary state of economic activities, characterizes too well the small volume of trade throughout the first centuries and draws attention too clearly to the predominance of agriculture to allow us to pass without glancing rapidly at its prescriptions.

Roman society, under the Kings and in the early days of the Republic, was composed of *gentes*, who cultivated a domain which was at first common to members of their class and gradually became split up into individual holdings. Throughout a long period the land, a sacred trust placed under the protection of religion and guarded by the family deities, remained inalienable. The rules, or rather the formulae, known alone to the aristocracy who governed this little world, forbade its sale or exchange. This prohibition can hardly be considered strange, for, apart from the fields and a few head of cattle, the Romans possessed nothing, and movable goods—themselves mere annexes and adjuncts to immovable property—were almost non-existent.

As the plebeians had at the beginning no share in the arable land, they were not only deprived of political rights but were also without civil rights. Knowledge of the legal precepts, reserved as it was to the *gentes* and held to be an attribute of divine inspiration, was forbidden them. Those of them who obtained a few acres to cultivate had but a revocable right of tenure. The ownership of property as citizens continued to be denied them.

Similarly, the right of entering into contracts, the *jus commercii*, remained the privilege of a tiny minority. But, at a time when all commodities were produced in the homestead and the division of labour had not yet made its appearance, the necessity for contracts was hardly an imperious

one. As for legitimate marriage, *jus connubii* with its grave legal consequences, it was forbidden to the plebeians, and consequently their children did not inherit in the paternal line. This system, in short, was an expression of the prevailing economic stagnation. Logically, it was condemned to failure on the day when Rome should enter into contact with other peoples, when industry should become established and trade should take its place as an essential factor in the existence of the people.

As we shall see later, this does not mean that the Romans abstained at the beginning from any commercial relations with the Latin or Etruscan populations living around them : on the contrary, periodical fairs were held in Central Italy, and had such relations not been introduced early the foreign influences which we shall observe would not have brought to bear upon industry. But the bartering which was carried on from the first ages was no more important than that which existed in Central Africa before the coming of Europeans and the handing over of chattels against other chattels does not necessarily presuppose the operation of legal principles.

The formation of a body of precepts, no longer the monopoly of the patricians, was found to be indispensable towards the beginning of the fifth century when the territory had already grown larger, when conquest had added wide estates to those which surrounded the city and trade had developed with the growth of population. The plebeians incorporated by Servius in the city, having taken from the nobility its chief political prerogatives, had no intention of remaining indefinitely deprived of civil rights, for this condition paralysed their economic progress. After long struggles, they succeeded in obtaining a code which was drawn up, in circumstances which are but vaguely known to us, by the *Decemviri.* It is however certain that a period of disturbances and of risings preceded this success, the extent of which appeared on that account the greater. This took place in 451 between the institution of the tribunes and the opening of the office of Quaestor to plebeians. It set the seal upon a real social revolution.

Thenceforward the plebeians enjoyed civil rights. They were at liberty to own property, enter into contracts and

celebrate marriages having full legal effect. The ordinances of the Twelve Tables remained primitive and full of archaic prescriptions, but the fact is by no means astonishing. Agricultural property preserved its sacred character ; its sale, now permitted, was hedged in by complications and discouraging formalities because the patricians were afraid of a division of their domains which would take away part of their lands and enfeeble their political authority. For a long period the types of contract were few and their difficulties were multiple. Then, under the pressure of an increased economic activity, the system of contracts became gradually more simple. A new system and one better adapted to daily needs became superimposed on that of the Twelve Tables. At the same time, in the interests of citizens engaged in foreign trade, whom an absolutely exclusive system would have deprived of assured profits, Rome permitted developments to go still further and granted the *jus commercii* to the conquered towns. When, in the third century, the nascent empire brought within its frontiers the Aequi, the Volsci, the Hernici, the Greek cities, the Etruscans and the Samnites, crossed the Apennine ridge and extended to busy ports and prosperous trading centres, the obstacles which had previously stood in the way of trade were removed or, rather, the very expansion of trade had broken down the rigour of ancient law.

CHAPTER V

SLAVERY

SLAVERY is the basis of the whole economic system in the States of antiquity. It became general, as we have said, in the known world of the ancients, like serfdom and the wage system at other periods. Without slavery Roman society is as unthinkable as would have been the Greek societies without it. Attica in the fifth century B.C., that is to say, during the phase of its splendour, counted ten times as many bondsmen as free men. It is true that towards the same time the proportion was far from being the same in the domain under Roman sway but every patrician family had already its contingent of slaves sharing the various tasks among them and unable, under penalty of death, to leave their master's house.

The rules which determined the growth of this inferior class, whose means of living were at least as well assured as those of the plebeians properly so called but who were denied the rights of citizenship and almost completely deprived of the rights of human beings, were the same, or nearly so, for all societies until the fall of the Roman Empire.

In this matter, Rome introduced no innovations. Her institutions resembled those of Greece, but the Western peoples with whom she came into conflict and who had had no relations with Greece or the Oriental states also practised the enslavement of the vanquished and made use of them to till the soil, or to exercise some rudimentary form of industry. Slavery, which none dreamed of denouncing or even criticizing, which was closely bound up with the prevailing condition of incessant strife, slavery maintained by war and requiring war as a means of obtaining recruits, was a recognized custom, a universal practice and one of the few features common to all existing forms of civilization.

Auguste Comte has shewn that an extremely simple conception lay behind the economy of the ancient cities. Each group of men had to divide into two sections; that of

the combatants and that of the workers : on the one hand a free class and on the other a servile class, which maintained it. The former flung itself upon the neighbouring peoples in order to increase its dominion and rob their wealth, the second made arms and shields and tilled the soil. The more its numbers increased the greater became the sources of subsistence of the nation which had appropriated this human cattle to its own uses.

Slavery, repugnant as it was to the great minds of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—although the states of Europe maintained it in force in their colonies until they discovered its economic uselessness—was regarded by the Roman authors, even by those of the end of the Empire, as an institution of divine right. In their eyes it was not a monstrous violation of the person but an attenuation of the lot of captives—a first reaction against the savage code of primitive warfare.

For this code, we must repeat, carried with it the massacre of the beaten and the total destruction of the defeated army. The kings of Egypt and Assyria derived prestige from the number of their victims. The Hebrews often put to the sword the garrisons of captured towns. Carnage was the final incident of every battle. At its inception slavery was perhaps a first step towards the introduction of more humane practices, but it was above all an economic revolution the broad lines of which are easily distinguishable. The agricultural system had just established itself. The tribes no longer flung themselves in search of subsistence upon the immense tracts which they overran ; they ceased to feed solely upon grain carried off from neighbouring tribes. Apart from periodical forays which brought them varied but uncertain wealth they carried on another form of activity which enabled them to obtain food in the intervals between campaigns—they attached themselves to the soil and endeavoured to obtain from it a regular yield. But the periods of peace were still too brief and the free men esteemed too highly the dangers and the licence of armed combat to settle down to manual labour. Instead of killing all their prisoners, they judged it more expedient to leave alive a certain number, whom they condemned to irksome and incessant labour. Bondage was thus life's ransom. The captives, instead of being mercilessly

butchered, were put in chains and distributed among the domains of the victors or sold in the public mart. It was the pressure of fresh needs which substituted this forced labour for death and created by the side of the class of masters one composed of despised beings, whose sole rights were those of receiving blows and toiling at the plough, of turning mills and performing the heavy tasks which free men disdained. Even the terrible Pharaohs, those mowers-down of nations, no longer massacred all their captives but drove them in large hordes to labour on public works. Rome from the beginning put the same plan into operation in order to ensure the exploitation of her domains and to restrict to a minimum the labour of her citizens.

At the period which we are considering the sources of slavery were moreover fairly numerous. The wars conducted by the Romans against the peoples of Latium brought them large numbers of captives. The State required that all prisoners taken on the field of battle should be sold, but sometimes the generals handed them over to their soldiers, who were all farmers owning more or less land. The kings and the consuls however shewed themselves prudent and slavery was not enforced without discernment or imposed as a collective penalty upon conquered towns. If all the vanquished had been deprived of their liberty the servile population would have been far too numerous in proportion to that of the free men, and since all these slaves would have belonged to the same race, or at least to neighbouring ethnical groups having the same or nearly the same language, Rome would have created around her territory an only too imminent peril. She preferred to draw dividing lines between her beaten foes. She established between peoples and even between the inhabitants of the same locality intricate distinctions of rank calculated to sow division. True she made slaves, but bondage was not made to appear the inevitable fate of all who had borne arms against her in vain. She admitted but one exception, the victims being the Tarentines, whose city was taken in 272.

Warfare, though the principal source of slaves, did not remain the only one. At an early period the Romans were able to acquire in the markets of Etruria and Campania the workers whose services they needed. There too they bought

arms, pottery and the products of the Greek and Eastern worlds and it is certain that from the earliest days of antiquity Gauls, Phoenicians and Phrygians brought iron with them to these fairs. But primitive law, by means of prescriptions, some of which were maintained in force whilst others were gradually attenuated and abolished, helped to swell the contingents. The sons of slaves were born slaves, an arrangement whereby, in conformity with the conceptions existing in ancient times, increased riches were assured to the owning classes. The latter had thus every interest in maintaining a situation in which the unions, provisional or otherwise, which came about between their slaves furnished reinforcements. The laws of the Twelve Tables laid down that a thief taken in the act should be reduced to the state of a bondsman and serve his denouncer. Any citizen who was not inscribed on the census registers lost his free status ; anyone refusing military service—the privilege of the free—was subjected to the same penalty. Persons sentenced to capital punishment but not executed became slaves. And finally the head of a family, having the right of life or death over his descendants, could sell them—after somewhat complicated formalities had been accomplished, it is true—and, in consideration of a fixed sum of money, could have them classed as movable objects belonging to the patrimony of a third person. Until the Petilian Law in the year 325 B.C., creditors had the right to seize the person of a debtor and to force him to work on their estate. It is of course necessary to distinguish between these causes of slavery, for some produced a permanent state except for manumission, whilst others produced a temporary one ; during several centuries nevertheless they existed side by side.

What was the price of slaves during this period of Roman history ? We have not even approximate figures and, though certain economists have thought it possible to put forward £16 as an average amount, their statements appear to be conjectural. For subsequent periods we are not quite so lacking in information, for the historians, the agriculturalists and even the comic poets provide us with certain details. The earliest centuries however are those which have left us the fewest documents of any kind and the writers of the age of Augustus had not much to say about earlier times, either

because they had collected few facts or because the thought of the small beginnings of their country was distasteful to them.

It is certain nevertheless that the price of a slave worker was much lower before the Punic wars than after the conquest of Greece and Asia. The owners of land during the period of the kings and until the rupture with Carthage had scarcely need of numerous hands. Purchases of slaves were not frequent and there was no competition to obtain them. There was no question of selecting slaves for their special qualifications, technical knowledge, or aptitude for heavy tasks, as was later demanded of the Greeks of Corinth or of Athens, the Gauls, or the Spaniards. Moreover, the price of all commodities—and the slave was a commodity—remained very low until the third century, when a complete economic and monetary revolution took place. Like all societies of primitive habit, with rudimentary trade and lacking in token money, that of Rome was completely without experience of high prices.

As we have already pointed out, the servile population was for several centuries inconsiderable in number and spread over a wide area, both in Rome and in the neighbouring territories. Political—one might say diplomatic—reasons and yet other motives which were bound up with considerations affecting the principle of ownership itself placed the formation of large bodies of slaves out of question.

The agronomists have drawn for us in great detail in the last phases of the Republic pictures of the rough but happy simplicity of the early ages and the poets have celebrated with sincere feeling the laborious existence of the citizens who fought against the Volsci and the Etruscans and who repulsed the Samnites. But those citizens were not entirely dependent upon the help of slaves.

The rural domain was in general small. It could not indeed be otherwise, for the whole Roman territory on the eve of the campaigns against Carthage did not cover one-tenth of the area of Italy. Even during the African war, at a time when this primitive system was still in force, many of the heads of the great families only exercised their right of property over estates of a modest area. Who has forgotten the story of Regulus and his one slave? There were, of course, exceptions. Historians tell us that in 291 a consul

employed two thousand captives to clear his woods but it would be interesting to know whether the figures have not been exaggerated and also whether the consul had not given this task to *servi publici*. The law of Licinius also, which as early as 366 stipulated that free workers should take part in agricultural labour, shows that the movement among the servile population was clearly manifesting itself. And it would seem that the end of the fourth century favoured its progress.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus, whose figures have been adopted by Dureau de la Malle, calculated that in 476 the Romans owned 17,000 slaves. A hundred or a hundred and fifty years later, according to other statistics which Tourmagne has collected, the number had increased to 40,000. As, in the interval, however, the area of land subject to Rome had multiplied at least twenty-fold, there is nothing in this increase that need cause surprise. Moreover, if we accept Tourmagne's figures and compare them with those which Beloch has drawn up in respect of the citizens themselves, there must have been at the middle of the fourth century one servile worker for each twelve persons of free condition. The proportion was thus relatively small, and remained in any case well below that reported to have existed in Athens at the time of Pericles.

It is true that, although the various causes of servitude which we have enumerated assured recruits for the servile army, it nevertheless suffered wastage and diminished by reason of the manumissions which continued to increase in number, especially in the fourth century. Although later, during the second period of the Empire, the large land-owners were to find it advantageous to stimulate the colony system, certain owners of landed property soon understood that the liberated slave, bound to the soil and living on the fruits of his labour, contributing largely to their needs and, owing them fruitful services as a kind of legalized and compulsory expression of gratitude, was a source of greater profit than a slave kept in chains and driven with the whip. It is clear that this theory was far from finding general acceptance, for otherwise there would be no explanation of the great expansion of the servile system in the second period of the history of the Republic, but it harmonizes fairly well

with the treatment accorded by the citizens of Rome at the beginning to the servants who worked with them and whose life they often shared.

It even happened sometimes that these manumissions were rendered necessary by practical considerations. A husbandman, for example, was given or acquired a new field at a long distance from the rest: unable to cultivate it or superintend its cultivation himself he would send a slave whom he set free, hoping thus to increase the yield. The manumissions were due moreover to a variety of motives. Recourse was had to them in order to obtain better services from a man thus relieved of legal quasi-incapacity and upon whom certain rights were thereby usefully conferred. It was also used to withdraw patrimony—of which the slave formed an integral part—from the reach of creditors or to obtain electoral backing in the form of a group of active followers ready and willing to terrorize a district, for at an early period the ruling clique at Rome came to shrink from no form of propaganda, whether it took the form of bluster or of terrorism.

The fact remains that the number of manumissions, restricted though it was in the sixth and fifth centuries when the slave population was itself but small, increased fairly considerably in the fourth. According to Beloch, who has obtained his data from several sources, the contingent of freedmen had reached 160,000 between 375 and 209. It is regrettable that it is not possible to distinguish between the period preceding the Punic wars and that contemporary with them.

That the Senate was in the fourth century already disturbed by the large number of manumissions is proved by the fact that it took measures to combat a practice which threatened to change the composition of the population. Little by little, the difficulties which early legislation had placed in the way of the introduction of slaves into the society of Rome were smoothed away, formalities were simplified and the three procedures which it was legitimate to employ to set men free—testament, appeal to the censor when the rolls were being prepared, and *vindicta*, which was a fictitious legal action to claim liberty with the collusion of the owner—were used concurrently. Thus whilst the ranks of the slave

workers were reinforced by every victorious war and by each city which fell, they were diminished in favour of free workers or men freed by the landowners themselves. It must be repeated that burdensome and even crushing obligations were still imposed upon those who benefited by this change and also that in the third and second centuries the captive population was to increase with fresh rapidity.

In early Rome, slaves were, in principle, chattels, but the word must not be taken in its narrowest acceptation. Law was soon to attenuate its rigours for them and in spite of the basic hardship of their lives they were less ill-treated in the fifth or fourth centuries than in the first. Even when the system of *gentes* was in full sway and the laws were neither codified nor promulgated, they were allowed to take part in the practice of religion and received decent burial—two points to which, as everyone knows, the ancient Romans attached especial importance.

Nor is that all. Although throughout several hundreds of years the servile worker was denied legal rights and remained in this respect excluded from human society, his master—from interest, no doubt, rather than from generosity—was obliged to care for his existence and provide for his elementary needs. By acting otherwise the small proprietor, whose resources were slender, who cultivated a small strip of land, but who nevertheless required the help of other hands, would have injured his own sources of income by destroying a portion of his capital.

It should be added that in these early centuries, when the servile element was still small and widely scattered amongst the fields, a permanent contact, which resulted in a form of personal tie, became established between master and slave. Both accomplished the same task and expended the same amount of effort. Community of work lessened distances, and life shared between master and slave brought about a certain familiarity which attenuated the difference of status and made the institution less brutal. For all these reasons, the owner, who could punish and even sentence to death, abstained from using his prerogatives.

Moreover the law intervened to discourage the use of violence liable to damage the patrimony of the people. Ancient enactments forbade even the killing of an ox without

cause: the Twelve Tables sentenced to a heavy fine any person who struck his slave and not long afterwards the censors adopted the practice of reprimanding citizens who abused the whip. In all these measures for mitigating oppression everything was relative, but the case of slavery was the same as that of the wage-earners at a later time. Just as in the nineteenth century the lot of wage-earners became most burdensome and crushing when the large factory took the place of the small workshop, so also the slaves, confined at the time of the Gracchi upon the huge estates and not knowing their masters, suffered a more cruel fate and were subject to more rigorous discipline.

The division into the *familia rustica* and the *familia urbana* would hardly seem to have prevailed during the early centuries. The first comprised slaves who were employed in the fields and the second those who worked in town houses. This classification only became general when Rome had grown into a large city in which the richer of her citizens owned spacious dwellings. For a long time the life of the Romans was a purely agricultural one and the majority of them were only to be found in the capital when markets or elections were being held. The slaves were used in working the land, though their labour was not restricted to agricultural routine. They shared the domestic handicrafts with the women and their services were used, for example, in making clothes. Thus their industrial rôle appears in earliest antiquity, but it remained at first a very restricted one and did not extend to any marked degree until much later. The servile workers were useful in other respects, too, in that they procured for their master still more direct forms of revenue: he could sell the children born in captivity upon his property or exchange for cash the products manufactured in his household.

A distinction which always existed and is more important to us than that between the *familia rustica* and the *familia urbana* is that between *servi publici* and *servi privati*. Whilst the latter were attached to the estates of private individuals and hardly ever changed master, the former were directly dependent upon the State. The magistrates, immediately after a war which had subjected a whole population, decided that a portion of it should be placed at their disposal. These

slaves, instead of forming part of the patrimony of the citizens, belonged to the public domain. They were employed in the early centuries in the extraction of ore and stone and more especially in the construction of aqueducts and roads. Their lot was undoubtedly far harder than that of the *servi privati*, for they lived in gangs and the State had not the same incentives as the small agriculturists to shew consideration to its employees.

If we are to find in primitive Rome any large groups of slaves it is among these *servi publici* that they must be sought. The very nature of the tasks to which they were set presupposed a fairly considerable concentration of workers. Thus it was in all probability in their ranks that the first ideas of revolt took root.

The slave risings disquieted and even terrorized the Romans on more than one occasion. Not only did these revolts play the same part as strikes at the present time in paralysing work and consequently threatening with famine a society which could only with difficulty communicate with the outside world and was without stocks, but they also hung threats of all kinds over the city. These mutinous slaves, who belonged to vanquished populations and had in some cases held a respected position or public office in their country before being constrained to grind corn or pasture cattle, retained their hatred of the victor and nursed their injured pride. Memories of their native hearths and homesickness for the soil from which they had been brutally torn united in their breasts with a fierce impulse to break their bonds, to become free men and have done with a social thraldom which held them down on the lowest rung of human existence. They knew that by taking to arms and by leaving the fields to which the law bound them they were sacrificing their lives, for the slave risings were always mercilessly repressed and the Romans would have felt that their whole economic fabric was jeopardized had they not been ruthless.

In 501, in 499, and 498 plots were discovered or revolts broke out, but in 419 the situation appeared really grave when, in the midst of a war against the peoples of Latium, Rome learned that bands of slaves were marching upon the city and planned to burn it. It was then no doubt that the famous saying was coined : " so many slaves, so many enemies." Time was to prove its truth.

CHAPTER VI

THE ARTISANS AND THE FIRST GUILDS

PROOF that primitive Rome contained free workmen and that labour was not confined to the *servi publici* or *servi privati* is furnished by the fact that the existence of corporations can be traced to the earliest antiquity.

Although historians are not agreed as to the origin of these associations, the date of their appearance, their number, or the exact part which they played, they are in agreement as to their existence from the time of the Kings. Of this there can be no room for doubt in the minds of those who have studied the rare documents which have been brought together on this subject. At an early period—probably indeed at all periods—there were craftsmen who belonged, it is true, to the plebeian class, whose political rights were at first non-existent but who, by the very fact that they were organized into a group, exercised an influence on the development of the political system. This point is, however, only mentioned by the way.

The ancient chroniclers attribute to Numa Pompilius, the second King of Rome, who is said to have governed from 715 to 672, the foundation of the colleges of craftsmen. Others, less categorical, ascribe it to the third king Tullus Hostilius who reigned from 672 to 648. The first version, which is that of Plutarch, has been generally adopted.

Were the guilds entirely created by the monarchy? The at times somewhat summary assertions of the Roman annalists must be interpreted with care, for they liked to give the leading personages of the time the credit for what was in reality collective action.

The theory is no longer held which credited the State with the actual creation of the Guilds. Moreover the latter were, during the first centuries, less concerned with their corporate interests or with the authority which they managed to acquire in the civic struggles than with the ceremonies of their cult and the burial of their dead. They were above all mutual aid societies whose members placed

themselves under the patronage of the same deity and undertook towards one another the obligation of providing an honourable burial. When one considers the importance which in primitive Rome attached to everything appertaining to religion, this statement need not cause surprise.

In any case, the State would have behaved in an unaccustomed way if it had intervened to bestow a cult upon a more or less compact group of men. It is probable that its interference was of little effect and not burdensome and that Numa, instead of instituting the colleges, restricted himself to authorizing or perhaps only to giving official recognition to their formation.

Be this as it may, it is usually admitted that eight of these associations came into being simultaneously. It is of interest to enumerate them, for their names alone show that certain industries had already become independent of domestic activities whereas others had not yet detached themselves. This nomenclature further demonstrates that artizans were engaged in very different categories of occupations. It is consequently an indication of the extent of diffusion and the rôle of artizan labour as opposed to that of the slaves.

The eight guilds of the seventh century were those of the flute-players, gold-smelters, smiths, dyers, cordwainers, curriers, brass-workers, and potters. It has been remarked that the workers in iron did not at that time form a group, which proves that iron-working was still either unknown in Rome or in any case rarely practised. Neither weavers nor bakers give their name to one of the colleges of Numa, but weaving and the baking of bread were practised in the home and it is known that the trade of baker only appeared in the first half of the second century before our era.

Was a ninth college constituted, in which were brought together those workers who could not belong to one of the others? Historians have debated this question at length but without settling it. Nor have they been able to establish that there was any order of importance between the eight guilds of Numa, in spite of the testimony which Plutarch has left us. It may be, however, that the first three were held in special consideration on account of the part which they were called upon to play in time of war.

It is at all events certain that the colleges were composed of free men. How indeed could they, in view of the ideas then prevailing, have accepted slaves in their ranks? The plebeians, who formed the nucleus of the colleges, admitted the *clientes* who separated themselves from the *gentes* and, at a time which cannot be exactly determined, the freedmen also became members of the colleges.

Constituted above all to ensure the celebration of somewhat complicated rites, the guilds offered a framework for the defence of vocational interests and a weapon to the plebeians in their struggle for the levelling up of the political order. It may be supposed that they were not unconnected with the secessions of the people to the hills in the neighbourhood of Rome whereby on several occasions the resistance of the patricians was overcome. But although the first colleges of Numa lasted until the end of the Republic, or even of the Empire, changing of course their nature and increasing their membership, the number of associations of this nature grew but slowly until the second century B.C. And this slowness of growth shows that the artisan class, though successful in defending its existence, was unable to become a strong force in the city.

CHAPTER VII

PRIMITIVE AGRICULTURE

WE have already seen that agriculture was considered in the early centuries of Rome as the occupation *par excellence*—if not the sole occupation—besides warfare, of the free citizen. All wealth was derived from the soil. The influence or lack of influence of a family depended on the number of acres or of cattle which it possessed. It has been noted that the adjective *locuples*, meaning opulent, is a contraction of the two words *loci plenus* which mean literally "full of estates". Pliny the Elder recorded that Roman surnames were borrowed from words of agricultural origin; thus Piso, Lentulus, Cicero, and others. It was cattle which served at first as money, and fines were expressed in terms of sheep and oxen.

Roman society had the same beginnings as all others and it is by no means surprising that it lived at first on the produce of its land, on a soil which was in no small degree stubborn and unhealthy, for the absence of slopes rendered work difficult and led to the accumulation of stagnant water. The peasants of the period of the Kings, and even those of the Republic, who cultivated Latium or the rugged mountains of the Sabine country, tilled soil far less fertile than that of the valley of the Po. Campania was an exception and for that reason long and sanguinary wars were waged for its possession.

This agriculture, which was the only source of subsistence of a people still young and inexpert in the industrial arts, was placed under the protection of the gods. It played a great part in the growth of the Roman juridical institutions and it also served to characterize a religion which was essentially utilitarian. Innumerable were ceremonies practised in order to obtain the protection of the gods over the work of the fields, and it was performed in strict conformity to pontifical regulations. The order of the various duties to be performed throughout the year was so severely fixed that none would have ventured

to disrespect it. The Termini, or posts marking the boundaries of land, were ranged on long untilled strips and respected like sacred things. It may be imagined how strong was the right of property and what daring would have been needed to trespass on the ground of a neighbour. The punishments enacted by human laws did not appear sufficient for such encroachment, for Numa consigned to the gods of the nether world those who should displace the Termini. The cattle themselves shared in some degree the sacred character of the soil. The slayer of an ox was liable to the death penalty.

These details evoke for us a whole society engrossed in agricultural matters and imbued with the idea that it was threatened with ruin and disappearance if it did not unremittingly devote every effort to the production of corn and the raising of stock.

When Rome was founded the first citizens had already abandoned pastoral life and settled on lands having definite boundaries, as did the Greeks, to whom they seem to have been indebted for examples or even lessons. In any case a real community of agricultural institutions established itself between Romans and Greeks, whether we consider the choice of cereals, the measurement and delimitation of estates, or the religious observances which were connected with the various seasons of the year.

The implements of husbandry consisted of an improvised plough—a tree-trunk with a forked branch, analogous to the plough used in Attica—sickles and axes. It was no equipment for intensive or perfected cultivation.

It would seem that the Romans cultivated in the first place and from the very earliest times spelt, barley, and millet. Wheat only came later and Varro fixes the date of its introduction at 450 B.C. Thereafter wheat flour, pounded in a mortar, was used almost exclusively for the preparation of domestic bread. We are without information as to the first appearance of the culture of the vine. Some consider that it was known from all time in Italy whilst others deny that it was practised by the first generations. It is, however, certain that during the period of the Kings and in the early days of the Republic very little wine was made, for the territories then occupied by Rome were hardly suited to the

development of vine-growing. The old legends show that the fig-tree was appreciated in the remotest times. The olive is said to have come from Greece in the reign of Tarquinius Priscus, towards 580 according to Pliny or not until thirty years later according to other writers.

Great consideration was accorded to the large cattle owner and we can easily see the reason for this particular form of esteem. It was a tribute to the index of wealth itself, to the possession of the actual medium of exchange : for a long time, moreover, it was the essential element of all individual property, for the soil was as yet undistributed. The ox, on account of the services which it rendered in Latium, was given the highest place, then came in order of value the horse, the donkey, and the mule. The smaller animals, more numerous but less prized, lived on the common pastures.

We may now judge how rudimentary were the conditions of primitive agriculture in Rome. Its implements were reduced to a minimum, its methods varied but little, flocks and herds were on the whole rare and the very smallness of the territory, divided as it was into estates of narrow extent, furthered these factors of weakness. The citizens, assisted by their children and by their relatives, devoted to agriculture all the time that they did not spend in the army. Their methods, as later agronomists recognized, were poor and improved but slowly, the succession of crops was unsatisfactory, for a system of rotation had not suggested itself to their simple minds and the too frequent sowing of wheat, the insufficiency of manure, and other causes contributed to keep the yield at its lowest. The clover fields, too, remained too meagre to acquire any real value.

Thus the territory of Rome furnished all in all a yield which in spite of intense individual effort hardly tended to increase. Was it sufficient for the modest requirements of the population ? It is supposed that at the very beginning, although cattle were exported to Etruria, the Volsci and the inhabitants of Campania and Sicily were obliged to furnish their contribution of corn.

Nevertheless, the price of corn and of cattle was strikingly low. Wheat is said to have cost 2½d. a bushel at the beginning of the third century, when an ox was reckoned in the scale of fines as the equivalent of £1 and a sheep at two shillings.

Agricultural life remained simple, frugal, and characterized by regular and persevering work throughout the earliest centuries. Even the wealthy, who did not hesitate to set their hand to the plough, gloried in their rusticity. All luxury was proscribed. The houses of the countryside were devoid of elegance, art, sumptuousness, and even of comfort. They were the dwellings of rough peasants, who could take to arms when it was necessary and cared little for delicate food or elegant clothing. Cases have been cited of generals who were fetched from the plough to be put at the head of their troops and who, when the enemy was conquered and opulent cities taken, returned to their oxen to resume the interrupted task. Curius, who fought against Pyrrhus of Epirus, cultivated with his own hands his small farm in the country of the Sabines. Cato the Elder, who greatly admired these countryfolk of past centuries, said "When our forefathers wished to speak of a good citizen they called him a good colonist and a good farmer".

The tasks which fell to these peasants were moreover infinitely varied. When the field no longer required their care and the cattle had returned to their stalls, they were obliged to concern themselves not only with feeding their family but also with the industrial tasks which had not yet become specialized. They presided over the manufacture of cloth, which the women wove under their supervision, whilst they themselves mended their agricultural implements, renewed their rough furniture, repaired damage done to their habitations, or made jars in which to keep food. Thus every form of human activity was to be found on the rural domain.

At the time when the heads of the Roman families emerged from the end of the state of common ownership in which the land had remained, long after the system of private property had been adopted in respect of cattle and the rudimentary implements of tillage and harvesting, landed property covered but a small area. The property occupied by the *gens*, in the usual acceptation of the word, was moreover divided into a portion laid under direct contribution and into holdings on revocable lease which were given to the *clientes* and exploited by them in virtue of lease agreements which could at any time be determined, and in exchange

for contributions in kind. We know that in the middle of the sixth century a distinction was made between 8,000 owners and 8,000 holders who divided amongst themselves about eighteen square leagues of cultivable ground. The largest fields did not exceed 20 *jugera*, or about 13 acres, with the exception of those belonging to the King and cultivated by statute labour. And even these dimensions excited suspicion—so much so that Servius, evidently with the intention of making himself popular, pared down the larger estates. He was the more able to act thus in that the patricians by their illegal and fraudulent encroachments upon the *ager publicus* had at that time already begun to add surreptitiously to their lands.

The primitive measure, the yoke, which represented the area which a pair of oxen could till *without resting* and was the equivalent of about half an acre, was for some time the average holding. The latter showed a tendency to increase when the *ager publicus*, that is to say the land taken from conquered peoples attained larger dimensions. It was the custom of the Romans to set aside for the benefit of the city a proportion—one-third or even two-thirds—of the arable and pasture land of their enemies. The pastures were not partitioned and all citizens had the right to take their cattle there on payment of a fee known as *scriptura*. The arable land was either assigned to the poorest, or leased subject to revocation in consideration of the payment of a tithe or a fifth, according to the yield which it could furnish. The patricians found it expedient at an early period to obtain concessions of land, in respect of which they assumed a semi-proprietorial attitude. It was against this tendency, renewed throughout succeeding centuries, that Servius was the first to take action. He took back the portions of the *ager* which had been occupied without just title and distributed to each plebeian head of a family seven *jugera*. Furthermore, a royal survey was made, in order that the division of holdings might be duly recorded. The action thus initiated by Servius seems to have made a deep impression, for at the time of the expulsion of the Kings any citizen owning more than five acres was regarded as dangerous and called an usurper.

The *latifundium*, in the full sense of the word, did not make an appearance during the epoch which began with the

proclamation of the Republic and ended with the Punic Wars, nor had the territory of Rome grown sufficiently to support it. It is, however, certain that property tended to become concentrated at the same time as the estates acquired greater dimensions in the course of the fifth and fourth centuries. The nobles, who controlled the Senate, and arranged that they should for preference be allotted the *ager* taken from the peoples of Latium, the Samnites, or even the Etruscans, ceased little by little to pay into the exchequer the tithe which they owed on their sheaves and the double-tithe on oil and wine. From being stewards of the State they became holders: they ended by claiming to be regarded as proprietors. They took advantage of the wars which followed one another without respite to remove the boundaries separating their original estates from those which they worked on lease. They laid hands all the more easily on the conquered territories in that the plebeians who were kept in the army and, unlike themselves, had no slaves at their disposal, were practically unable to exploit the portion which fell to their share. It was above all during the hard campaigns of Samnium, which cost many lives and thus diminished the number of claimants, that the *ager publicus* was monopolized by the aristocracy. Agriculture on a large scale only began to be the rule in the fourth century: it came into being two hundred years before it was fully developed.

It was, however, not only the confiscation of the *ager* by a minority which stimulated the development of agriculture on a large scale. It flourished on the ruins of that previously practised on a small scale which had already become menaced at the time of the rupture with Carthage and—although it shewed more resistance than it was to offer during the second century—was engaged in a hard struggle against unfavourable circumstances. The prolonged wars not only deprived the plebeians and the poor of any equitable participation in the public lands, but they also rendered sterile the fields of the humble labourers who were no longer able to attend to the essential tasks. Discouraged, not knowing when they would be able to return to the plough, these peasants, before joining the army, sold their holdings for whatever they would fetch. Or else, deeply involved in

debts, contracted perhaps in order to rebuild their houses which had fallen victim to the wind and weather during their absence, perhaps to replace a beast which had died from lack of care, they learned that their property had been transferred to the lender—who was nearly always a patrician. It is true that this development did not follow, during this phase of Roman history, quite such a clear-cut path as characterized it at the time of the Gracchi, but the essential outlines were already traced. Whilst the estates of the rich were increasing, pasture gained on arable land and the small holders who had been expropriated resumed on lease the fields which they had previously owned, happy even that they could become *métayers*.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRST AGRARIAN LAWS

THE yielding of agriculture on a small scale to that on a large scale was a matter which from all time occupied the minds of the more far-sighted of the Romans—even of those who still held out for the patrician prerogatives and, whilst wishing to maintain the preponderance of an oligarchy, knew that the existence of a rural middle class was indispensable if the balance were to be kept intact. The agrarian laws passed towards the middle of the second century were not the first of their kind and neither Tiberius nor Caius brought forward a completely new formula; they merely applied with varying degrees of energy and courage, a method to which the magistrates—following Servius himself—had already had recourse at various periods in the preceding centuries.

The problem which presented itself shortly after the fall of the monarchy was that of preventing the total expropriation of the small holders and thereby averting a peril which threatened the large owners and the State of which they were the masters. Since all, or nearly all, labour was in the first place agricultural, what could be done to avoid throwing into permanent unemployment, that is to say, into permanent sedition, those men who no longer had the necessary resources for husbandry and with rare exceptions were not in a position to follow any other calling? As an individual, each patrician found it in his interest to increase as far as possible his own estate. The patricians, as a social order, were interested in keeping alive an intermediary class between themselves and the disinherited masses. The agrarian laws, which some have qualified as revolutionary, were in reality conservative measures. But the nobility seldom realized that it was the necessity of attaching poor families to the soil of Latium which constituted their utility. They understood but imperfectly the political wisdom of those who proposed further and juster partitions

of the *ager* or the restoration of lots unjustly seized. Many of their number did not see beyond the immediate loss.

It is well to enumerate rapidly and in chronological order the decisions which tended, if not to prevent concentration at least to create small proprietors, though their efficacy was doubtful and they were unable to check completely a movement which had become irresistible. For although it may not yet be possible to speak of the coming into being of the *latifundia*, the elements of the future *latifundium* made their appearance little by little from the period which commenced shortly after the end of the monarchy.

The revolution which the patricians brought about in 509, gave them full licence to pursue their work of agrarian spoliation. They absorbed the *ager* and abolished the tithe and the *scriptura* for pasturing cattle. After twenty years the small husbandmen were complaining more and more bitterly. It was then that a wealthy aristocrat, Spurius Cassius, foreseeing future dangers, pressed first for the survey of the public land taken from the Hernici and later for the distribution of half of it among the needy, the other half to be leased against the payment of a definite rent. He was either assassinated or legally executed. His removal only increased the troubles of the time, for the political demands of the proletariat were making themselves felt at the same time as the agrarian claims. Between 485 and 467 ten agrarian bills were put forward. In 456, the tribune Icilius succeeded in carrying the distribution of the Aventine land among the poor families. But it was too small for its partition to be efficacious. In 417, the tribunes Spurius Maecilius and Spurius Maetilius made further proposals which were not heeded. Then came the Gallic invasion which ransacked the fields, burned the cabins, destroyed the cattle, converted Latium into a desert and sowed ruin among the small proprietors, whose clamour became the more insistent. Manlius Capitolinus, who listened to them, was hurled down the Tarpeian rock, for the aristocracy punished those among them who went over to the opposing class. And finally in the year 366 the laws of Licinius were adopted which contained among other provisions the fundamental prohibitions that no one might possess more than 500

jugera of the public land or pasture on it more than a hundred head of oxen or 500 sheep. Thus it was possible to allot to the expropriated plebeians a part of the arable land retaken from its usurpers, and at the same time the poor man's cattle might seek pasture on the uncultivated portion of the *ager* without running the risk of being turned off in favour of the cattle of the rich. Lots of seven *jugera* were set apart for cultivators without land of their own, and besides this category, all citizens who cultivated portions of the *ager* paid a tax of one-fifth on olives and wine and one-tenth on corn. These laws were never enforced and their author himself was fined for being in possession of more than the maximum amount of land. The patricians, of course, used a thousand expedients to evade their legal obligations.

CHAPTER IX

THE FIRST COLONIES

THE *ager publicus* for the possession of which the nobles and plebeians were contending was still within reach of the city and capable of being cultivated without obliging the husbandman to leave his own fields and go away to settle in districts but recently conquered and hardly pacified. The lands wrested by the Romans from the vanquished were not always easy of occupation. When in the fourth and third centuries the territory was extended simultaneously northwards and southwards, those who wished to take portions of it were obliged to take up arms and to leave Rome and its neighbourhood almost without any prospect of returning. Later, the lands of Etruria and of Campania were in their turn to be seized upon by the patricians when all danger of a rising had been removed and the subjugation of the country seemed complete. But during the early days of their annexation, the lands added to the *ager* in comparatively remote countries gave rise to little rivalry for their possession: Rome sent out colonists to dominate the conquered peoples and tied the emigrants to the soil by means of contractual grants.

These colonies figure prominently in the history of the centuries which followed the expulsion of the Kings and later still played an important rôle. In the social order this institution permitted the aristocracy to rid itself of the claims of the small farmers who had been expropriated, to overcome the danger arising from the presence of debtors who were loudly demanding that their debts should be cancelled and, in short, to exclude from the city all the subversive elements which might come together there. In this respect it would appear that the Greek cities, which practised the same method long before the Romans, handed down to them very definite principles. From the military point of view, the colonies were so many fortresses against counter-attacks and their very presence was a check to

plans of sedition. The citizens sent to them were for the most part old soldiers and all were men able to bear arms who, in the case of "tumult" would have been the more prompt to resort to them in that they would be called upon to defend not only their own lives but also those of their families who lived with them and the possession of the strip of land attributed to them by the State.

And finally, in the economic order, these colonies, which were not always artificial creations and which were grafted on to living bodies, ensured the improvement of the land. Around them elementary works of drainage were accomplished, the forests were cleared, paths beaten until roads could be made, whilst the fields, cultivated according to the methods already introduced in Latium, supplied Rome with their surplus production. Thus the colonization took on the appearance of a work of the greatest utility and permanence. Certain of these colonies, founded in the fourth and third centuries, were to drag out a painful existence until the day came when a few sparse ruins bore testimony to their having existed, but there were others which prospered, formed the starting point for great cities and handed down for all time a human population rooted to the soil.

All these colonies contributed to the pacification of the districts which they dominated, and where war was resumed they either broke or slowed down the enemy's effort. All, in varying degrees, combined to render Italy fertile and to develop the cultivation there of corn, the olive and the vine, though but few served to reconstitute a land-owning middle-class, for in the second century, when the Carthaginian danger had passed and peace had spread throughout the Peninsula, the patricians endeavoured to appropriate the remoter *ager*, just as they had earlier seized upon the public lands of primitive Latium, and the colonists little by little sold and lost their holdings, which went to swell the *latifundia*.

But we are still concerned here with the initial phase of colonization. A *senatus consultum* or resolution of the Senate, passed after a popular vote had been taken, determined the places to be occupied, the number of colonists, the extent of the estates to be divided and the areas of each share. In general the groups which left Rome for this purpose consisted

of about 1,800 persons; men, women and children. But certain colonies were much larger, either because the districts in which they were established were still in open revolt and a small colony might be liable to too great a risk of destruction or because the area to be cultivated was extensive enough to warrant immigration on a large scale. During the wars of the fourth century, 14,000 plebeians were sent to Sora, Alba and Carseoli (Carsoli). Sutrium and Nepete were established in Etruria, Minturnae and Sinuessa in Campania, Antium, Setia (Sezza) and Norba in the land of the Volsci.

We may also mention Cabicum, Anxur, Terracina, Interamna, and Labicum.

From 334 to 264, according to a historian, 65 communities were founded by the Senate and in consequence more than 100,000 persons of all ages and both sexes must have settled in the regions whose conquest Rome wished to consolidate. The area of arable ground allotted to each head of a family was small. It consisted of about 2 acres at Cabicum and $3\frac{1}{2}$ at Anxur, but the Senate took care to furnish the emigrants with sufficient resources to meet their essential needs. It was above all concerned that the enterprise should not fail and that the plebeians should not return discouraged and irritated to the capital to air complaints and fill the city with sounds of wrath.

CHAPTER X

THE PROBLEM OF FOOD SUPPLIES

THE problem of food supplies engaged the attention of the Romans from the earliest times. It was above all at the end of the Republic and under the Empire when their city sheltered a considerable body of men, that the *annona* was to become a complicated system, but from the fifth century B.C., and perhaps even under the Kings, the authorities set to work to amass provisions and above all to procure corn for the people.

The difficulties in the way of obtaining supplies were the greater in proportion as transport was slower and peace more rare. The development of property and its progressive concentration—in spite of the founding of colonies which ensured subsistence for more or less unimportant sections of the *plebs*—little by little rendered the task of the magistrates more difficult. So long as the small holders were in process of disappearing and the fields of wheat, barley and millet were giving place to vineyards, olive fields and pasture land, the production of corn decreased. At the beginning and in the middle of the fifth century, terrible famines broke out. Those of 495 and 440 were long remembered. They were renewed during the years in which warfare depopulated the countryside and paralysed agriculture. At such times the regular magistrates, the plebeian and curule aediles—or the magistrates specially appointed, *praefecti annonae*—were obliged to turn to other peoples, whether near or far, who had surplus resources. According to Livy, there were from the year 488 large imports of wheat, Campania, Umbria, Etruria and Sicily being laid under contribution.

They were called upon to supply ever-increasing quantities in proportion to the growth of the population of Rome herself. In the days of Servius the metropolis already had an area of 1,300 acres, whilst the largest cities of Central Italy hardly attained one-third of this. Caere comprised 289 and Capua 444. In the fourth century, houses began to be built

in place of the modest dwellings of the early days of the Republic and it is probable that buildings three storeys high were constructed before the advent of Hannibal. The number of inhabitants was increased by the arrival from all sides of new slaves, of freedmen, who came to the city in the hope of finding riches, and of expropriated small holders. It was with a view to removing any danger which might arise from the existence of this seething mob, which famine might have led to the gravest excesses, that the Senate supported the appeals to other countries, and the sale of the imported wheat at a reduced price. In 432, the aediles sold wheat at one as per bushel. Later, it would seem that they even distributed bread, thus foreshadowing the acts of largesse performed under the Empire. But the influx of cereals from Sicily and Campania, and above all their sale below market prices, contributed to the ruin of agriculture in Latium and the discouragement of the farmers.

CHAPTER XI

FIRST STEPS IN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

WE know that the Romans had the genius of imitation even if they were lacking in that of invention. Montesquieu has shewn that they never hesitated to appropriate the advances made by other peoples—even those vanquished by Rome. In the industrial order of things they received a kind of perpetual initiation by borrowing from all the communities with whom they came into contact through either war or commerce such manufacturing processes as seemed most efficient and expeditious.

Three great influences—though if one trace them, as some have done, to their origin they are found to merge—affected the life of Rome ; they were those of the Etruscans, the Greeks and the Eastern peoples—Phoenicians and Egyptians. Long before the foundation of the city, trade relations existed between the various regions bounding the eastern Mediterranean and from all antiquity men and merchandise moved between Italy, Sicily, Hellas and the littoral of Africa and Asia. A series of migrations followed the sea and land routes, restoring and consolidating the lines which traffic had first taken. This is not the place for a consideration of the part played by Cyprus in the metallurgy of primitive or even prehistoric times or for an investigation into the affinities which have been observed between certain of the Etruscan arts and those of Asia at an earlier period. One point, however, has been clearly brought to light in the studies which have been undertaken and in the comparisons which have been made between the buildings and the potteries of Rome and those of other nations—and that is that the companions of Romulus and their descendants did not distinguish themselves by their originality.

It may readily be conceived that the Etruscans handed down much of their practical knowledge to the small community which had grown up towards the middle of the eighth century on the banks of the Tiber. For at least two hundred

years they had been settled in Central Italy. They had created towns, some of which were powerful and well-populated, and had begun to utilize the mineral resources of a relatively rich soil. The Greek colonies fringed Southern Italy and Sicily: they were Cumae, Rhegium (now Reggio), Zancle (Messina), Catania, Himera, Leontium, Tarentum, Sybaris and Dicaearchia and emigrants from Athens, Corinth, Chalcis and elsewhere who had settled on the shores of the Adriatic or of the Tyrrhenian Sea, had brought with them proven dexterity in weaving, the art of the potter and metal-working. The Phoenicians, bold navigators of whom we shall speak again later, who crossed all the seas, made known to the Romans the glass of Sidon and of Egypt and the chemical dyeing processes which were already in use in the East.

Thus the industry of Rome was born at the point where all these currents met. It assimilated the lessons which were brought to it from the North and the South, though often it assimilated them poorly and grossly—unable to compete in æsthetic feeling, in delicacy and in finish with its tutors. It was undoubtedly from the Etruscan world that the highest notions were derived, and the pre-eminence in this respect of the populations of Clusium, Caere and Tarquinii is the more explicable in that they constituted in the eighth and seventh centuries the most powerful group in the Peninsula.

At a time when the Romans were still building wooden huts, the Etruscans were constructing enormous ramparts of tufa, as at Pyrgi, Cosa, Vetulonia and Rusellae—by laying quadrangular stones, roughly hewn, upon one another in horizontal lines. It would seem that the walls of the Palatine hill and the *enceinte* of Roma Quadrata, before that of Servius, were constructed on this model. The Roman form of dress was borrowed from the Etruscans, who from a very early date made tunics embroidered with gold, chlamydes bordered with purple, and light sandals. They smelted iron in the furnaces of Populonia in the neighbourhood of the great iron ore deposits of the Island of Elba and sold it in the form of pig-iron in all the little towns of the Peninsula. The date of the spread of this industry of iron-working to the Tyrrhenian littoral is thought to have been towards 700 B.C. But gold, silver and ivory had already furnished material for the artist's hand, as is proved by the

objects found in tombs, and bronze had been put to a large number of uses. The Romans learned from the Etruscans how to make candelabra and trumpets ; from the same source they acquired the secrets of the ceramic art and pottery ornamented with black and with red figures from the workshops of Volsinii, Volaterrae and Caere spread throughout the Peninsula. When the conquerors entered Volsinii they found more than 2,000 clay statues of all sizes, the tallest measuring fifteen metres.

They were however not quick to learn the secrets of manufacture. Rome never became a large industrial city and it is now known that during the early centuries she displayed but little manufacturing activity. Moreover, economic and social conditions—the sparse population, the contempt in which manual labour was held, the lack of raw materials and the late survival of labour in the household—all contributed to maintain this mediocrity.

We are without even elementary information as to the technical methods of the early ages. Such particulars as the authors—among them Pliny the Elder—have left us refer to the end of the Republic or the early days of the Empire. Technical equipment must have been very poor. Mechanical aids were non-existent, for it was not until the third and second centuries B.C. that the learned men of Alexandria, and Archimedes himself, made their important discoveries, and these discoveries did not at once spread throughout the known world. The spread of slavery, especially after the Samnite wars, also hampered progress in manufacture for many years.

The guilds of Numa, by their names alone, make it possible to estimate the industrial activity of Rome under the Kings, and it is probable that this activity changed its character but slowly from the downfall of the monarchy to the rupture with Carthage. The workers were distributed among the metal industries (goldsmelters, blacksmiths, and brass-workers), dyeing, pottery and the leather-working industry (cordwainers and curriers).

We have seen that the principles of metallurgy had been inculcated into the Romans by the Etruscans who had two chief centres of production, Populonia and Volaterrae, the smelting furnaces of which were celebrated throughout Italy.

They installed their works in the neighbourhood of the deposits of ore and this method was general in ancient times on account of the lack of easy communications. So long as her domain was confined to Latium, Rome was far from possessing metal wealth comparable with that of the Etruscans. Neither copper, iron, gold nor silver was abundant in the region of the Tiber and it was only when she extended her territory to the north and in fact seized the Etruscan littoral and the Isle of Elba, that Rome began to work mines to an effective extent. The few shallow pockets, open to the sky, from which she extracted ore of little value were not sufficient, even in the early days, to satisfy the needs of her workers. It must be added that these open pits, of which the owner of the ground was the sole legal proprietor, were closed in the fourth century by virtue of a *senatus consultum*.

Bronze was used much more than iron in primitive metal-working. The Roman guild of brass-workers made statues, such as that of the she-wolf of the Capitol which dates back to the year 296 B.C., lamps, which were cast or hammered, and various ornaments. The victorious generals—especially those who led the campaigns in Samnium—brought back great masses of alloys which were handed over to the workers and could be fashioned into a thousand different forms ; it was in the fourth century that this bronze industry began to assume considerable proportions.

Gold and silver were used in making crowns and jewellery on the models which the Etruscans had bequeathed to the Romans. The guild of gold-workers (*aurifices*) soon achieved fame for their skill, which nevertheless did not match that of the Tarquinians. It was they who manufactured the rings which great persons wore with ostentation and the gold and silver articles which became one of the luxuries of the patricians. But the sumptuary laws hampered their development and from the beginning of the third century no one individual was allowed to possess more than ten pounds of manufactured silver, a prohibition which, although not entirely obeyed, exercised an influence on the habits of the rich. The looking-glasses of those days—plain sheets of metal—were manufactured by the metal-workers of the city or were, in many cases, imported from the towns of Etruria or Greece proper.

The making of clothes remained for the most part until a very late period a domestic industry. Woollens were, during the first centuries, the chief or even the sole woven stuffs. It is to be noted that no guild, in the time of Numa, had assumed the preparation or the working up of raw wool. The wool with the greatest repute was that furnished by the flocks of Apulia and Samnium—territories which were not occupied until the end of the period which we are now considering. From the eighth century until the sixth, heads of families were obliged to utilize the wool shorn from the sheep of Latium, which had not been crossed with Greek strains, and were less highly esteemed than those of Southern Italy. This wool once obtained was given to the women, who practised all the elementary textile operations. It was only in the second phase of the Republic that captives took over this work from the wives of the free husbandmen and many matrons for a long time even regarded it as an honour to spin and weave with their own hands their husbands' togas and their children's clothes. They used the distaff and the vertical loom, which was employed for a fairly long time before the horizontal loom was introduced.

The Romans learned early to dye wool. The dye-stuffs archil, saffron and indigo were for the most part derived from plants, but kermes was also used, and above all purple, which was obtained from several varieties of mollusc which were fairly abundant in the Eastern Mediterranean. Those found at Tyre which yielded black, blue-black, violet and red were universally renowned. It is certain that from remotest antiquity, the processes of manufacture were known to the peoples of Italy and were transmitted by the Etruscans to the artisans of Rome. Purple remained the symbol of wealth in the royal epoch, when the trabea, bordered by a wide purple band, was the sign of command. The aedile Lentulus Spinther owed his notoriety—which has come down to our day—to his *praetexta*.

The curriers and cordwainers, who from the reign of Numa were organized into a group, seem to have maintained a fairly flourishing industry. Leather was used in making sandals in the Etruscan style and later for the *calcei* and other footgear which fashion imposed.

The guild of potters—one of the most ancient—guarded

the interests of the workers of all branches of the ceramic art, which was in those early ages an industry of prime importance. The agriculturists had need of various receptacles to hold their olives, wine and fruit and although many of them were able to make vases of all shapes and sizes many others, in order to save time and trouble, acquired the habit of buying their requirements from the professional makers of amphorae and casks. The division of labour came about little by little through the mere pressure of circumstances. The potters made the vases required for everyday use and those intended for domestic decoration. They also manufactured lamps, which at first took their shape from the rough earthenware pots of the time, but later acquired a less clumsy appearance. The internal construction of these lamps was simple—there was a recipient for oil and there were spouts for the wicks, which numbered from one to four. The use of moulds became general and vases were decorated externally with more or less complicated designs, analogous to those with which the Etruscans used to ornament their own pottery. But the Roman guild never attained the degree of refinement which characterized Etruscan work; the statues which its members turned out seemed coarse to persons of taste, and when Tarquin the Elder wished to erect on the Capitol a beautiful clay image of Jupiter, he sent for Volcanius, a figure carver of Veii.

CHAPTER XII

THE BEGINNINGS OF TRADE

LIKE that of industry, the growth of trade in Rome was slow. The reasons were the same—the simplicity of primitive civilization and its few needs, the existence of a self-sufficing unit of domestic labour, the deliberate concentration of all activities upon agricultural or pastoral pursuits and the general lack of consideration for all activities other than tilling the soil. In the earliest times, however, Rome was only deprived of trade in so far as she had prevented manufacture from leaving the landed estates. Economic rules are never so absolute that they do not permit of deviation in certain directions. There was a Roman trade in the eighth and the seventh centuries just as there were infant industries in the days of Numa. But the trade, like the industries, was scanty and restricted and its usages—like the processes of metal-working, pottery, or dyeing—were imported from abroad. The traditions of Rhodes, the technical language of Graecia Magna and Sicily, imposed themselves upon the city of the Tiber, which moreover only acquired at a late period a distinct class of traders in the strict sense of the word. Primitive barter rendered impossible any economic division, which is only suited to a relatively developed society.

Great commercial peoples, who drew into their own hands practically the whole traffic of the known world, were competing for the trade of Italy, the eastern Mediterranean, the western Mediterranean and the Adriatic when Rome was still no more than the chief town of a rural population. It is well that we should enumerate these nations and consider briefly the struggles—often long and accompanied by sudden changes of fortune—in which they were involved, for they were the teachers of the Romans who succeeded them and, with their talent for adaptation, learned their lessons wonderfully well.

The Etruscans, whose scattered centres have been found between the valley of the Tiber and that of the Arno, dominated the whole intermediate part of the Peninsula.

In that region and in the regions lying to the South and to the North of their own territory they found a market for their manufactured and partially manufactured metal objects, their pottery, their statuettes and their fine wools. They were in constant contact with the Cisalpine tribes and with the East, whose inventions they assimilated. All the trade routes between the Tyrrhenian Sea and the furthest reaches of the Adriatic were in their hands and they used this preponderance skilfully.

The Hellenic colonies of Graecia Magna and of Sicily were all large ports from which merchant fleets set out to cross the two Mediterranean basins. Cumae, Tarentum and Syracuse were the great entrepots of this Greek trade, which did not shrink at times from assuming the forms of piracy or organized pillage, and in any case created a permanent tie between southern Italy and the chief cities of Attica and the Peloponnese. But the enterprising and wily Greeks, whose period of prosperity lasted from the seventh to the fifth century, encountered Phoenicians in every latitude where they sailed, and the latter even surpassed them in the spirit of adventure and in daring. Founding ports of call here, there and everywhere, setting up trading-stations where they happened to land, they sailed out into the Ocean in quest of the metals of the Cassiterides. They sank ruthlessly such foreign ships as they found in their tracks. When competition between themselves and the Greeks had become so acute that it degenerated into armed warfare, they appealed to Carthage, which had arisen on the soil of Africa about a century before Rome was founded on the banks of the Tiber.

A colony of Tyre, and consequently inhabited by Phoenicians, Carthage created a vast empire, comprising a portion of the African littoral and the islands which rise from the Mediterranean between Africa and Europe. Its vessels, laden with merchandise, sailed to Cyprus or Egypt and went from Cornubia (Cornwall) to the countries which are now called Malabar and Sierra Leone. From everywhere they brought back immense riches which served to increase the opulence of an insatiable plutocracy.

The conflict between the Carthaginians and the Greeks was sharp. The Greeks conquered in 480 and a period then opened in which Syracuse and its Greek allies ruled the seas.

But in the fourth century Carthage gained the upper hand over the allies and was able to maintain its superiority until the wars of the succeeding century. It had but one rival, though it is true a weaker one—Marseilles, founded towards 600 which had covered with colonies the coast between the Pyrenees and the first summits of the Apennines. Antibes, Nice, Port Vendres, Toulon, La Ciotat and Agde were for Marseilles so many depôts which distributed goods in the hinterland. Its mariners were hardly less adventurous than those of Tyre, of Sidon and of Carthage. Towards 325, the navigator Pytheas sailed, via Cadiz, to the countries which later took the names of Great Britain, Pomerania, Jutland and Norway and he wrote an account of his long voyage through the misty and little-known waters of the North.

Such were the great trade currents—if one may use the phrase—of the civilized world in the days of the Roman Kings and for the first three and a half centuries of the Republic. Rome had but a small share in them: at the beginning she had neither the wealth, nor the inventive faculties, nor the means of action of the nations which were competing for commercial supremacy. Her products were few and little prized and her requirements too restricted to give her occasion for close or frequent relations with remote countries. She maintained an attitude of reserve and, whilst pursuing a policy of conquest which, if not methodical, was at least uninterrupted throughout the Peninsula, she made every effort to live on good terms with the commercial nations, which were also maritime nations, and whose fleets more than once threatened her coasts. Later, in the third century, when the Greek colonies had come under her sway and she had conquered Campania and thrust back the Etruscans, she was to shew herself more enterprising, but the Kings, and after them the Senate, for four hundred years resorted to diplomatic action in order to ensure a friendly attitude on the part of the Mediterranean capitals, and to disarm their greed.

The whole Roman policy consisted of signing trade agreements which laid down definite zones of operation for the contracting parties and prohibited piracy. In these treaties Rome figured as a second or third rate power.

The first treaty was concluded with Carthage in 509.

The text has come down to us and is worthy of reproduction on account of the light which it throws upon the relations existing at that time between the future protagonists of the Punic Wars :—

"Between the Romans and their Allies of the one part and the Carthaginians and the Allies of Carthage of the other part, there shall be peace and friendship in the following conditions :—

"The Romans and their Allies shall not sail beyond the Fair Promontory (Cape Bon) unless driven by the tempest or pursued by their enemies. In such case they shall not purchase or take anything beyond what is necessary for the repair of their ships and the sacrifices to the gods and they shall leave again within five days. Their merchants may trade in Carthage but no transaction shall be valid unless made by the intermediary of the public crier and the public scribe. The same shall apply in respect of Africa, Sardinia and the part of Sicily under Carthaginian rule.

"The Carthaginians and their Allies shall do no hurt to the peoples of Ardea, of Antium, of Laurentum, of Circeii, nor to those of Terracina nor to any other of the Latins owing allegiance to Rome. They shall abstain from attacking the towns not under the dominion of Rome and should they take such a town they shall render it uninjured to Rome. They shall build no fortress in Latium and should they disembark armed on Latin territory they shall be gone before night."

This treaty is an important document. It proves in the first instance that Rome and Carthage were in fairly regular relations with one another and that Roman traders, as early as the sixth century, were accustomed to visit Africa. It shews also that Ardea, Antium and Terracina played a part in the economic life of Latium, but above all it bears witness to the immense superiority of forces which Carthage could muster. For the treaty in no way obliged Carthage to restrict its navigation or to forbid to its fleets the access of certain zones of the Tyrrhenian Sea. Nor did it allot to the Romans and their allies any special part of the coast or lay down rules to which the Carthaginians must conform in order that their trading in Latium should be legal. It merely obliged them to abstain from any act of violence or of piracy. In

short, it was to secure themselves against brigandage that the Romans accepted the conditions imposed by the powerful maritime republic, onerous and hampering to future commercial development though they were.

A second treaty was negotiated in 348. During the 160 years which had passed since the first convention, Carthage had strengthened its position; in extending its empire it had crushed the troublesome rivalry of Syracuse. Carthage was no less exacting in the second treaty, to which Utica and Tyre also appended their signatures, Rome renewed her undertaking to refrain from navigating in the eastern Mediterranean or from passing the Pillars of Hercules; she promised not to trade in Sardinia or Africa, but by way of exception the Romans were permitted to trade in Carthage with the same degree of freedom as was granted to the Carthaginians in Rome. The clause which forbade Carthage to molest the Latin cities outside the territory of Rome disappeared: there was in any case less reason for such a proviso in that many of the cities in question had been absorbed in Roman territory.

A third treaty, between the same parties, was concluded at the time of the Pyrrhic wars. Other pacts of a similar type were signed by Rome with Marseilles, Syracuse and Rhodes. The result of these negotiations was that Rome came into relationship with all the great ports of the two Mediterranean basins. As however these agreements were always more favourable to the other signatories than to Rome they were an explicit recognition of her economic inferiority.

The historians have left us brief particulars of the markets which were held in the city. These took place every nine days and were at first held in the Forum: when however the latter became solely a political meeting-ground, the markets were held in premises adapted for the purpose and designated the Macellum. We do not know when this building was constructed, but it was destroyed in 175 B.C. by fire, and rebuilt without delay.

The trade conducted by primitive Rome with her neighbours was concentrated in the periodical great fairs. These were held at the temple of Feronia, in Etruria, at Fregellae in the country of the Volsci, and at the foot of Soracte in the land of the Sabines. Hatria in Umbria was

also a locality much frequented by buyers and sellers. To Hatria the Romans brought timber and salt; thither they led the cattle which were for a long time their sole export, taking in return the ingots of metal or the tools and earthenware which they required for farming or the exercise of a craft. Trade extended later when it became necessary to have recourse to the corn of Campania and Sicily, and the delicate vases of Greece and the purple of Tyre were in demand among the patrician families. Until the third century, however, these transactions remained restricted. The customs dues, which had been instituted during the period of the Kings and which the Republic abolished or reduced, never brought any great return to the treasury. A further proof of the meagreness of this trade is furnished by the fact that merchants paid no special taxes. Revenue was provided by taxes on cattle, by the taxes on the land—which were payable in kind—and finally by the salt monopoly which was introduced by Ancus.

CHAPTER XIII

TRANSPORT

TRANSPORT by water was much more common in ancient times than carriage by road. It is true that, at a period when atmospheric phenomena had not been investigated and navigation was mainly carried out by sailing ship, the merchant fleets refrained for months at a time from putting to sea. The use of the rivers, whose flow was completely unregulated, was also subject to long periods of inaction. They constituted, however, like the sea, natural routes available to all and, again like the sea, they formed the necessary links between the nations.

Prior to the fourth century, Rome had no fleet, or if she had one it was so insignificant that nobody has mentioned it. Her external trade was in the hands of the regular freight vessels of the Mediterranean and Adriatic, belonging to the nations which we have enumerated. For three hundred years, Rome was unable to protect the coast towns against the pirates which attacked them. However, she had, by the seventh century, created a port—Ostia—and in 416 she sent for the first time her colonists to another point on the coast which subsequently became an entrepot—Antium.

We know that in 394 a Roman vessel left for Greece: that her setting out was regarded in the light of a great event by contemporaries is proved by the fact that the record of it has come down to us. In 354 the coast was fortified. In 338, when the people of Antium had been conquered, their captured galleons served as a nucleus for the fleet which was beginning to come into existence. In the year 311, it had developed to a fairly considerable extent: two commanders-in-chief had been designated and the Senate entrusted them with the duty of convoying colonists to Corsica with a squadron of twenty-five sail. Finally, in 267, that is to say on the eve of the war with Carthage, four Quaestors for the Fleet were nominated.

Ostia had been founded towards the year 630 by Ancus Marcius and we are unaware of the extent of its traffic at that remote date : this entrepot never acquired independent existence and its life remained intimately bound up with that of the city. Later, after 350, Pyrgi, Antium, Terracina, Ariminum and Brindisi became ports of call. Ariminum and Cales, like Ostia, sheltered part of the navy.

The great roads, vestiges of which are to be seen in so many places, and which constitute to the present day the most substantial relics of the power of Rome, date for the most part from the second period of the Republic—that which begins with the Punic wars and ends with the triumph of Octavius.

For nearly 450 years, the Romans had at their disposal, as the only means of communication from town to town, narrow paths traced by human feet and, through the forests, tracks roughly cleared by the axe. It can well be conceived what obstacles this absence of wide roads placed in the way of armies on the march and how it restricted trade and even contact between nations. But the economic situation was so primitive that the need for direct roads capable of being used by vehicles had not arisen.

The first public works to be carried out were of quite a different order, and consisted of the erection of the temples raised to the great divinities by the kings—that to Jupiter for example—or the building of the rampart walls—such as those built by Servius—and the construction of the great sewer (*Cloaca Maxima*). On this work, the kings made use of the slaves belonging to the State or their personal slaves, upon whom they imposed terrible tasks. Those, for instance, engaged at the time of the elder Tarquin upon the great sewer, the dimensions of which were such that a carriage could have passed through it, were subjected to the same treatment as the 60,000 men employed by Dionysius on Epipolae at Syracuse. The workmen died by hundreds and by thousands, for they had to rely almost entirely upon their unaided arms to raise the stones and place them in position.

In the fourth century—in 313 to be exact—Appius drew up the plans for the first aqueduct : the work was executed forthwith and led to a considerable improvement in the water supply of Rome, which had until then been dependent

upon the Tiber and upon springs. This aqueduct, which lay almost entirely underground, had a length of 11,190 paces.[1] In the following year, he built the road which bears his name (the Appian Way) : this joined the capital with Capua, the rich city of Campania from which she drew a part of her corn. Constructed between the second and third Samnite wars, its value was mainly military and it was for seventy-two years the only road used by the Roman armies. It does not seem, at least during the first period of this history, to have played an important economic role.

[1] The second aqueduct was constructed by M. Curius Dentatus in 273 with booty taken from Pyrrhus. It diverted a part of the waters of the Anio and measured 43,000 paces, of which 41,179 were underground.

CHAPTER XIV

THE USE OF MONEY

FOR a very lengthy period of time, indeed throughout the three centuries which followed the foundation of their city, the Romans did not use money as we understand the term. They practised barter : that is to say they exchanged goods for goods directly—wood for bronze or salt for pottery —as is the custom of primitive peoples, whose trade is restricted to a minimum. When this system proved inconvenient and inadequate, the head of cattle (*pecus*) became a measure of value or rather the actual instrument of exchange. This first development will be readily understood if we remember that the activities of Rome were in the first place entirely agricultural and pastoral. Oxen and sheep were so truly the essential element of wealth that the Latin word for wealth was *pecunia*. At the great fairs of Soracte and Fragellae, the farmers of the Lower Tiber exchanged cattle for implements of husbandry. Fines were at that time expressed in terms of oxen or sheep and, even after various other forms of progress had been achieved and money with its value stamped upon it had passed into current use, this practice tended to subsist. It was even confirmed in 454 and 452 by the laws known as *Aternia Tarpeia* and *Menenia Sestia*, which set up a ratio of one ox to ten sheep.

It is entirely unnecessary to lay stress upon the obstacles which such practices placed in the way of trade. When the latter developed, after the first few reigns, recourse was had to a new system, that of the *aes rude*, whereby payments were made in ingots of raw copper which were weighed on more or less clumsy scales and broken up into pieces of varying size. The unit was the pound of 327 modern grammes ($11\frac{1}{4}$ oz. avoirdupois), but many ingots weighed much less.

According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus and to Pliny, Servius Tullius introduced a decisive innovation when he created the *aes signatum*. The State guaranteed the purity of the metal and the ingots were ornamented with figures of

PLATE I

EARLY ROMAN COINS.

1. As, with head of Janus, prow of ship, and vertical line.—2. Quadrans, with Hercules, prow, and three balls.—3. Silver Campanian didrachm, with Mars, horse, and ROMANO.

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[*face p.* 80.

animals in relief—the heads of oxen and of sheep—which represented the first intermediary values, but they were still cut off and weighed as before. Certain of these ingots, which excavations have brought to light, weigh as much as four or five pounds.

The first money deserving of the name appeared in 451. It was the growth of trade, and the consequent breaking down of the early isolation of Rome, thus brought into relations with peoples of more highly developed civilization, which caused this great change. The weighing and division of ingots were operations which called for time and thereby delayed and paralysed trade. The first coins—also of copper—were still very heavy and this epoch of copper monometallism —that of the *aes grave*—was to last for nearly two hundred years, i.e. from 451 to 269. The unit was the as, weighing twelve ounces, which later fell to eleven and subsequently to ten ounces, but at the time of the Twelve Tables corresponded to 327 grammes. The subdivisions were the *semis* (163·7 gr.), the *triens* (109·15), the *quadrans* (81·86), the *sextans* (54·58), and the *uncia* (27 grammes). The multiples were the *dupondius* (2 "asses"), the *tripondius* (3 asses), the *quincussis* (5 asses) and *decussis* (10 asses).

These coins were marked to represent their value; they were cast in moulds and bore various designs. The as bore the head of *Janus bifrons*, the *semis* the image of Jupiter, the *triens* that of Minerva, whilst Hercules, Mercury and the goddess Roma figured on the *quadrans*, *sextans* and *uncia* respectively. All the coins bore on the reverse a design of the prow of a ship. Furthermore the as was recognizable by a vertical line, the *uncia* by its ball and multiples of the as by their repeated lines—two for the *dupondius* and three for the *tripondius*, the *quincussis* being marked with a V and the *decussis* with an X. In the same way, the multiples of the *uncia* shewed balls in proportionate number. The copper used for minting purposes was a double alloy, 7 per cent of lead and 23 per cent of tin being added. Many specimens of the *aes grave* are extant, and 1575 asses were found in 1852 in the Cerveteri excavations alone.

The laws of the Twelve Tables stipulated that fines should be paid in terms of the as, but the use of cattle continued for a considerable time afterwards.

In the period extending from 451 to 269, three monetary systems existed concurrently in central Italy. The *aes grave* was hardly current outside Latium and differing systems had been adopted on the one hand by the Etruscans and Umbrians who, it is clear, were economically united and on the other by the population of the Adriatic coast, which was more subject to Greek influences.

The year 269 marked the beginning of a new phase in the monetary history of Rome. Silver coins made their appearance side by side with those of copper, without, however, driving the latter out of circulation. Let us consider why this new system succeeded in establishing itself and why it was the more favoured one at that time.

In the first place, trade had reached an unprecedented development; that in corn, cattle and also in slaves and in manufactured articles had increased in proportion as military campaigns brought with them increases of territory. By modern standards we may judge it as petty or even negligible, nevertheless it was greatly in excess of that of the time of Servius. The *aes grave* could not cope with it, for the use of that money imposed insupportable restrictions. At all costs, some other raw material—some more precious metal than copper—must be found, one capable of representing a far greater value in the same bulk. This metal was to be silver, which Spain, Macedonia and certain other countries furnished in abundance and seafarers carried through the length and breadth of the Mediterranean.

In the second place, Rome, in the course of her wars against the Samnites and against Pyrrhus, came into contact with the great Greek cities of the Tyrrhenean coast and the Adriatic littoral. These opulent cities, whose markets contained every kind of product had, following the example of the chief towns of Greece, minted their own silver money for a considerable period of time. Their monetary system was, at the middle of the fourth century, far in advance of that of the Romans and the latter began to suffer from the inferiority of their own system in the international transactions which the course of events brought about and multiplied. The booty taken from the Osci contained numerous silver coins weighing up to 8 grammes. When the Roman prefects

were installed in the centres of Graecia Magna they were obliged to tolerate in these flourishing cities the minting of silver money. We know that Capua was authorized in 317 to mint drachmas weighing 6·61 grammes and that a similar liberty was permitted to Cumae and Naples. The conquest of Tarentum in 272 brought the victors immense reserves of precious metal.

Three years later, the Senate ordered the first denarii to be put into circulation. They corresponded to 10 asses, were marked with an X and a figure of the Goddess Roma, weighed 4·55 gr., like the drachma, and were worth 11d. in modern currency. The quinarius was made the equivalent of five asses and the sesterce of $2\frac{1}{2}$ asses. The ratio of value between silver and copper was fixed at 1 : 250.

Throughout this period, all the minting of denarii, quinarii and sesterces was concentrated in Rome itself. The only mint, situated in the temple of Juno Moneta on the Capitoline Hill, was directed by three officials, the *III Viri Monetales*, who signed the pieces, the latter bearing after the name of their unit the mark *III Viri A.A.F.F.* (*Tres Viri Argento, Auro, Flando, Feriundo*).

These magistrates were responsible for the refining of the ingots, and for the standard and weight; they had to be recruited from among the members of the Equestrian Order and aged at least 21. Their appointment lasted for two years. For a long time they did not succeed in minting coins comparable with those of Sicily or Greece, the beauty and purity of which were famed throughout the ancient world.

The introduction of silver as a medium of exchange coincided with a general enhancement of all commodity prices. An article which could formerly be purchased for one piece of *aes grave* cost a silver coin. It is, however, probable that the beginning of this change of values somewhat preceded the currency reorganization, for from the fifth to the third centuries the scale of fines increased incessantly and with great rapidity. Menenius Agrippa, who was sent by the Senate in 494 to the Sacred Mount to appease the plebeian sedition, died of chagrin because he was called upon to pay a penalty of 2,000 asses. A hundred years later, Camillus, the conqueror of Veii, was sentenced to a fine of 30,000 asses.

Yet a century afterwards, at the time when the copper system was about to be superseded by that of silver, the magistrates were authorized to impose upon delinquents of high standing a fine of 500,000 asses. The constant increase characterizes to a certain degree the augmentation of general wealth after the Samnite wars and the annexation of the rich territories of central Italy.

CHAPTER XV

CREDIT AND INTEREST

CREDIT played a great part in primitive Rome and the history of debt is constantly bound up with that of the political and social struggles. As in all entirely or almost entirely agricultural societies, the loan of corn, cattle, or weighed or minted money was an operation bound up with a multiplicity of formalities, entailing rigorous guarantees in favour of the creditor and heavy charges and intolerable menaces for the debtor.

The Roman farmer, attached as he was to his land, was often obliged in spite of his heavy toil to turn to the patricans who had in their hands practically the whole of the wealth of the time. When called to the army, the farmer was obliged to equip himself and to feed his slave for months at a time; moreover he was obliged to provide for his family whilst his strength was diverted from productive tasks. He also borrowed in order to restore his fields after they had become the prey of weeds during his absence or to replenish his cattle—a few head of oxen and sheep—which he found dead or diseased on his return, or to renew his agricultural implements. The plebeians of this epoch were virtually unable to live without debts, but the debts soon began to crush those who had contracted them, for production was so small and wars were so frequent that it was impossible—or practically so—to shake off the burden.

Credit was the great weapon of the aristocracy against the lower class. The nobility was thereby enabled to place in its power the small farmers, whose labour and lives it controlled until the day when they realized that they were oppressed and formed alliances strong enough to break for the time being their state of serfdom.

As securities were unknown during the first centuries of Rome and since creditors claimed guarantees, cruel laws gave them all powers over the person and property of the debtor. Not only were creditors able to add to their own

domain the land of an insolvent borrower, but they were even entitled to reduce him to slavery and, in virtue of the earlier laws, to divide his limbs among themselves. It may be conceived that the question of debts was for numerous reasons one of the fundamental problems of Roman antiquity, and that it will be found at the basis of all social development from the downfall of the monarchy to the laws of Licinius and also, during the second period of this history, until the civil wars of the first century. The concentration of land reposed to a great extent on the workings of the credit system, the property of the rich increasing almost automatically by the addition of that of the poor, and the seizure of mortgaged property being the main reason for this expropriation.

Usury was a general practice. The magistrates—who issued regulations affecting all aspects of the economic life of Rome—fixed the rate of interest and were incessantly renewing their enactments. At times they even forbade the charging of any interest upon money, but their orders remained a dead letter. When the patricians had reason to fear—temporarily—unpleasant results from the violation of these edicts, they found some ingenious means of evading them ; they had recourse to intermediaries, the Latins for instance, who were not affected by the prohibitions imposed upon the citizens.

As to what the official rates were in the different stages of this first epoch, we are very inadequately informed, for historians are far from being in agreement and the most divergent figures are put forward. It is certain that until the middle of the fifth century, regulations in this domain were purely arbitrary. The laws of the Twelve Tables fixed the maximum monthly interest at one per cent according to certain authorities and at much less according to others who accept the version that money was lent at ten per cent or even at eight and a third per cent per annum. Any higher rate is said to have been classed as usurious and the too grasping creditor was compelled to restore four times the sum which he had irregularly received. Other information of an equally dubious nature has reached us. In 397, it would appear that the rate was restricted to twelve per cent, and if this is correct it would seem that the prescriptions of the

Twelve Tables had been carried out to but a very small extent. In 356 the limit was again ten per cent; it was only five per cent in 347, rose to six per cent in 344—and in 342 interest was suddenly prohibited altogether. It may be that these rapid fluctuations are to be explained by the necessities of the moment; it may also be that the historians who have related them and who wrote at a much later date had collected erroneous particulars. What is certain is that the laws were never obeyed and that usury was practised with great persistency. The rate of twelve per cent was in practice not a maximum but a minimum.

The severity of the law in its application to borrowers, the cruel exactions of the lenders, the progressive confiscation of the land of the small farmers and the unceasing threats to which their liberty was exposed contributed to create rancour and to sow among the masses of the plebeians the seeds of revolt. The resistance offered by the patricians to the political demands of this mass of men coincided in so far as its effect was to foment sedition with the rapacity of the usurers who sprang from the ranks of the same patrician class. When the people, in the middle of a foreign war, left the city, took refuge on a hill on the outskirts and refused to fight, they were giving vent to their anger against an arrogant oligarchy and their hatred of their pitiless creditors. The secessions of 495 and of 286—of the Sacred Mount and of the Janiculum—are the best known, but there were others. The remission of debts was on many occasions the slogan of the peasants who voted in the city and of the artisans who by the very force of events were associated with their party. When public anger became too clamorous and the swollen ranks of the debtors became too dangerously active, the magistrates took measures to calm them. The aristocracy abandoned or reduced their claims, but only to resume after a short delay the usurious operations which strengthened their hold over men and increased their chances of monopolizing property.

As in the Greek republics, the abolition of debts was in Rome practically a normal governmental measure, repeated at almost regular intervals and apparently necessary to the equilibrium and good order of the State. We know that this was done after the secession of the Sacred Mount, that

it was repeated two hundred years later at the time of the secession of the Janiculum and that the Licinian Laws, which marked a date of capital importance in the internal history of Rome, granted a whole series of reductions and remissions to the borrowers who were most heavily in debt. And it would seem that the lenders were on other occasions defrauded, in the interest of public tranquillity, of all or part of the returns which they expected. They were far from being discouraged by these set-backs. The future was to be theirs.

Dealings in money began in Rome at the end of the period of the Kings, i.e. at the time when the *aes signatum* had displaced the *aes rude*. Historians relate that money exchange booths were established on the Forum at the time of Tarquinius Superbus, but the nature of the operations which the changers conducted remains shrouded in obscurity. Their business must have increased, especially in the third century, when silver and copper coins were in circulation side by side and those of the cities of Graecia Magna began to pour into the metropolis.

PART TWO

FROM THE PUNIC WARS TO THE EMPIRE

264–30 B.C.

THE second period of Roman history covers two hundred and thirty-four years, from the beginning of the Punic wars down to the victory of Octavius, which marked the origin of the Empire. From the economic point of view as from the purely political, it appears extremely complex. Rome, once the centre of a little country no larger than six French *départements*, subjugated and assimilated the whole of Italy, established her dominion over the two other peninsulas forming the southern limits of Europe and seized the African littoral and the coasts of Asia Minor and Syria, with the result that she was the uncontested mistress of the whole Mediterranean basin. This phase of conquest, which began in hard and often unequal struggles with the great commercial and maritime metropolis of the third century, Carthage, and ended with the seizure of the second city of the world in the first century, Alexandria, and of the most fertile and industrially developed country Egypt, is one of the most stupendous periods of continuous warfare of which history makes mention.

Not only did this series of fruitful campaigns establish the authority of Rome over a territory five times as large as that of contemporary France or Germany, and assign to her the command of the Mediterranean and part of the Atlantic, but it brought the Romans into successive contact with the most diverse civilizations: Carthage, Macedonia, Greece, the semi-Hellenized monarchies of Antiochus and Mithridates, Gaul with its indigenous customs and Egypt with its refinements of intellectual culture were incorporated one by one in the Empire. The influence of the vanquished and annexed populations varied in degree but the authority of Greek thought and the splendours of Asiatic luxury made themselves generally felt among the victors. A great

metamorphosis began in the city of Romulus halfway through the second century. Whilst the population was growing, whilst foreigners were pouring in and whilst the older quarters of the city were being made more beautiful, simplicity was being ousted by pomp and ostentation. In spite of the sumptuary laws and the protests of a continually decreasing minority, the masters of the day, the *equites* and the new nobility who had acquired wealth by the systematic exploitation of the State domains and by usury, adopted methods of living which had hitherto been unknown and spent money lavishly. The mob fell into ecstasies before the spoils taken from the Asiatic rulers from whom huge tributes were exacted by the triumphant generals who proudly exhibited their treasures of war. Currency increased in abundance from age to age, and the capitalists who concentrated it in their own hands and often amassed fortunes of colossal size for those times astounded the people by the magnificence of their tables and their suites.

This transformation of the standards of living coincided with the growth of civil war. As the plutocracy accumulated its wealth it relegated the plebeians to an ever more pitiable condition. The *latifundia*, which were occupied by herds of slaves—who, too, were carried off from subjugated countries—increased incessantly at the expense of the small holdings. The evolution which had begun in the fourth century, continued with irresistible force ; the dispossessed husbandmen fled to Rome, whilst the cultivation of cereals—ruined as it was by imports from Sicily, Africa and Egypt—gave way to that of the vine and the olive, to the breeding of rare and costly birds and the raising of the luxurious fruits which adorned the tables of Lucullus, Crassus, and their like. A formidable army of unemployed grew up in the capital—a ready prey to the seductions of the ambitious, a permanent menace to social balance and a revolutionary force which never acted for its own profit. The Gracchi endeavoured in vain to re-create a middle class by passing agrarian laws and establishing colonies, and to appease the hungry mob by multiplying the benefits of the *annona*. The old senatorial aristocracy would not listen to their voice, and the new equestrian aristocracy was only concerned for its own wealth. The army chiefs took advantage of this mob, enrolled in

the legions, to seize all power for themselves, to assure their own selfish and brutal ends and to decimate their enemies by interminable proscriptions. For more than a hundred years blood flowed in Rome almost without cease, anarchy reigned incessantly and the old institutions, though preserved in outward form, yielded in fact to a series of dictatorships.

But at the same time the hard and formal legal system of antiquity began to attenuate. The Roman people, suddenly plunged into luxurious habits and demanding more and more of the cruder types of pleasure in proportion as the incessant civil wars abolished security, broke with the old legal prescriptions. New requirements created a new economic life. Italian agriculture was in jeopardy but the whole of the known world contributed to Italy's requirements. The mines were ransacked for precious metals; industry, stimulated by the lessons derived from the annexed portion of Asia, entered into the manufacturing phase and the great proprietors employed either on their estates or in the capital gangs of servile workers which were at times of very large size. Side by side with the slaves the free guilds subsisted, in spite of the difficulties of competition until the day when legal injunctions were devised to punish them for their intrusion into politics. Great activity was developed on the whole periphery of the Mediterranean coast in order to provide the capital with the varied products which her equestrian class demanded and to sustain a trade which was, from time to time, disturbed by pirates. This trade already exceeded the confines of the Mediterranean and, at the end of the Republic, caravans were beginning to bring in the precious wares of Arabia, Mesopotamia and Persia. Navigation, in spite of the burdens which at that time inevitably weighed upon it, attained something approaching regularity and served the old ports which had been saved from decay and the new ports which Rome brought into being to satisfy her needs. The Roman world, although torn by civil wars and by slave revolts and in some regions already exhausted, offered the spectacle of unheard-of prosperity. But it was not that of a nation enjoying unity and participating throughout its ranks in increased fortune; it was that of an oligarchy of pillagers who exploited tens of millions of men, subjected them to permanent and practically unpaid labour

and, to crown all, confiscated by means of usury public and private fortunes as they began to accumulate again.

During the whole of this period, when the economic system was changing so greatly as practically to be revolutionizing itself, when an industrial and agricultural revolution was being accomplished and when money was circulating with such rapidity as had never been known before, Rome did not change her customs. She remained true to herself. Humanity toiled to satisfy her aristocrats.

CHAPTER I

TERRITORIAL EXPANSION

A NEW era was inaugurated with the Punic wars which came about shortly after the final conquest of Samnium, the retreat of Pyrrhus and the chastisement of Tarentum. Until then the Romans had found themselves opposed to loosely organized tribes and to kings at the head of bands greedy for booty. Neither tribes nor kings were capable of pursuing anything in the nature of a far-sighted policy, of any action requiring protracted effort or of a combined sea and land offensive. At the beginning of the third century Carthage represented the greatest power in the known world after the partition of the Alexandrian empire. Carthage had armies and fleets, tried diplomats, colonies or settlements throughout the western Mediterranean, and unlimited financial resources. The victor of Syracuse, it had signed with the Romans commercial treaties each of which was a fresh humiliation for Rome. After the capture of Tarentum and the annexation of the Greek cities to the Roman sphere of influence, conflict was inevitable between the great African city and the capital of Latium. Sicily furnished the occasion and the pretext. Rome might well have disappeared in the tragic duel that was the logical outcome of the great struggle which had previously taken place between the Greeks and Phœnicians: she was obliged, in the midst of warfare, to improvise a fleet and her rival seemed to have every advantage. In spite of terrible disasters, she won. When, after two periods of battles lasting in all for forty years she looked back upon the events which had decided her fate, she could evoke days of mourning when her squadrons were destroyed, when the enemy was approaching her walls with rapid strides, when the fields of Etruria and of the Sabine country were overrun by Carthaginian cavalry and soldiers were falling by tens of thousands. And yet all these defeats failed to crush her and even ended in brilliant victories. As a recompense for refusing to despair and for surmounting the most demoralizing crises she subjugated the arrogant

plutocracy which had established itself on the soil of Africa and which had come near to converting Rome herself into a Phœnician colony.

The first war lasted from 264 to 241. The reader will excuse me for not reciting the events which characterized it, interesting though they may be. Crushed, Carthage signed a treaty which established her inferiority : she abandoned Sicily and undertook to pay tribute to the extent of 3,200 talents in ten annuities.

Shortly afterwards, Rome exploited her victory by annexing Corsica and Sardinia and imposed upon her enemies a further tribute of twelve hundred talents. Thus this first fortunate encounter brought Rome an extension of territory of not less than 21,500 square miles, though its population appears to have been somewhat sparse.

The second war began in 219, when Hannibal, in the course of the expeditions led by Hamilcar and Hasdrubal in Spain, conquered Saguntum. Here again it is not possible to enter into details of the marvellous campaign which the Carthaginian general has rendered immortal by his victories at the Ticinus, the Trebia, Trasimene and Cannae. Rome, which had seemed lost, recovered with superhuman energy. Carthage, crushed at Zama in 202, renounced any claim to Spain, and the islands and promised to pay an indemnity amounting to the equivalent of ten thousand talents within fifty years. For the future Carthage and her African possessions merely formed a protectorate. The face of the Mediterranean world has suddenly changed : one power had ceased to exist and another was resplendent in its stead. At that time Roman influence was exercised over nearly 160,000 square miles of land.

From 225 to 207 Rome had thrust back the Gauls from Cisalpine Gaul, had taken Milan and had established military colonies at Cremona and Placentia. She had made her strength felt on the Illyrian coast by quelling the pirates who infested the northern Adriatic and had at last brought cities of Greece into alliance with her, thus foreshadowing the conquest of the Balkan peninsula. Her diplomatic system is here clearly seen. It consisted of forming friendships and of offering her protection in such a way as to permit, at any given moment and in favourable circumstances, of invasion by arms.

Intervention in the Greek and Oriental worlds followed almost immediately upon the Punic wars. The states which had issued from the dismemberment of the Alexandrian empire still seemed powerful and their rulers, as the result of various combinations, claimed to hold sway in the Archipelago and the eastern Mediterranean. Philip of Macedonia and Antiochus of Syria threatened simultaneously Greece, where Rome had supporters, and Egypt—Rome's ally since the year 300 and one of the sources of her grain supply. Philip was the first to encounter the legions and in 197 Flamininus conquered him at Cynoscephalae and obliged him by treaty to renounce any adventure on Greek soil, to abandon his fleet and to pay tribute to the extent of £240,000. Rome then declared Greece "free", that is, liberated from Macedonian tutelage, but she knew that the Greeks would make use of this liberty only in order to destroy themselves in internecine strife and that when the time came she could subjugate them in her own interest.

Antiochus of Syria conceived that he would be more fortunate than Philip. Confident in the strength of his empire, bounded—in theory at least—by the Archipelago and the Indus, he flung himself in his turn upon the Balkan peninsula. He was stopped at Thermopylae in 191, forced to retreat into Asia, and crushed at Magnesia on the slopes of Mount Sipylus, where he lost 50,000 men, whilst only 350 legionaries are said to have been killed. He accepted the protection of Rome, and in his turn promised to keep a fleet no longer, and to pay £320,000 annually for eleven years. The Senate might have annexed Asia Minor which had thus been wrested from Antiochus, but, faithful to a policy which was beginning to develop, it gave this vast and wealthy domain to a client prince.

Interest then again turned to Macedonia. Perseus wished to recommence the attempt made by Philip, exploiting for his purposes the divisions of Greece. Aemilius Paulus beat him disastrously at Pydna in 168. The results of this success were enormous : the territory of Macedonia, divided first of all and then annexed in 146, gave Rome two extremely valuable ports in the Adriatic, Dyrrhachium and Apollonia. The Greek towns which like Corinth had shewn themselves hostile to the Romans were punished and sacked and Greece herself was made into a province in 146.

Carthage disappeared in the same year. Its successive defeats had not crushed it. Half a century after Zama it had recovered to the point of re-establishing an economic influence. With 700,000 inhabitants it seemed to challenge the arrogance of Rome. Cato became alarmed at this fresh acquisition of power and wealth. The *equites* wished to seize this fertile African soil in order to exploit it to the full by establishing upon it their agricultural system. Scipio Aemilianus, after a prolonged siege and terrible street-fighting, conquered the Punic city and destroyed it. The territory of Carthage became a province with Utica as its capital.

During this period, which extends from the first Macedonian war until the triumph of Aemilianus, the activity of Rome was again directed to Cisalpine Gaul, to Liguria, Istria, and the Iberian peninsula. The insurrections of Spain and of Lusitania had been put down, Viriathus having been assassinated in 140 by order of the Senate and Numantia having fallen in 133. The immense domain which stretched from the Pyrenees to Gades (the modern Cadiz) and from Cartagena to the mouth of the Tagus came finally under the jurisdiction of the Senate. Seventy years after the treaty which gave her all this territory, Rome had consolidated her dominion over it.

This was followed, in 133, by the death of Attalus of Pergamus, who bequeathed Asia Minor to the power which protected his dynasty after the defeat of the Syrians. Asia Minor was reduced to the status of a province in 129.

The expansion of the territory under the sway of Rome was enormous during the first sixty-five years of the second century. The war-loving city was already in possession of the three peninsulas of the Mediterranean; she directed the affairs of Egypt, for she had by her victory at Pydna snatched that country from the hands of Antiochus IV of Syria, and had even settled a grave dispute between two brothers who were rival claimants to the throne of Alexandria; she had destroyed the glories of Rhodes, had acquired a foothold in Africa where she occupied Utica and the surrounding country, and in Asia, where she reorganized the kingdom of Attalus. She had laid all the foundations of her future Empire, had crushed the sovereigns who stood in her way, had dislocated and divided the rival states to such an extent that they were

mere pawns in her diplomatic game, and had extended over nearly the whole of the known world her clever and complex schemes of direct domination, protectorates, friendly tutelage, and *entente*.

For Rome, however, the phase of warfare had not yet come to an end. The year 129 is but a date which one may select as suitable for a rapid review of what had been accomplished. It did not even mark a truce of any great duration. Between the subjected or protected territories and beyond the confines of the zones of influence barbarian chiefs were waiting to further their hard-dying ambitions, and temporary kingdoms were set up by the efforts of captains of obstinate purpose : these had to be quelled—sometimes at the price of supreme efforts.

Jugurtha still held out in northern Africa. He had created a Numidian Empire by violence, he defended it by corruption and bought the Roman magistrates ; his clever tactics enabled him to beat the legions. He was not crushed until fourteen years had passed—in 104 B.C. His states were divided, the greater part being given to Bocchus, king of Mauretania, who delivered Jugurtha over to Sulla, then quaestor of Marius.

As early as 124, the Romans had entered southern Gaul, the possession of which had become necessary to them for the purpose of establishing a land link between Italy and Spain. They found there a fertile soil which was capable of yielding rich crops, an equable climate, a coast not lacking in natural harbours and a fairly dense population : moreover they could rely on an old alliance, that of Marseilles. It was indeed the latter town which furnished a motive for intervention by asking for help against the tribes of the hinterland. Aix was founded in a strong position, then the king of the Arverni, Bituitus, and the Allobrogian chief, who supported his cause were successively conquered. Roman dominion extended from Vienne to Toulouse and the province of Narbonensis was formed in 118 and constituted a passage between the Italian and the Iberian peninsulas. Several decades later the contact thus established with the larger colonies of Gaul was to lead to the wars of Caesar.

At the same time as Narbonensis was being organized an immense movement of the Germanic barbarians shook central Europe. The precursors of the hordes of invaders who were

to follow at more or less regular intervals, the Cimbri and Teutones, threw themselves first upon the north-eastern frontier of Italy, then turned to the west, encircled the Alps, and, towards 109, descended into the valley of the Rhone. They imposed a series of defeats upon the legions, and killed 100,000 men in 105 B.C. near Orange. It was not until four years later that the Senate was delivered of this terrible menace by Marius, who crushed the Teutones at Aix and the Cimbri at Vercelli.

East followed West in providing Rome with cause for anxiety. Mithridates, the Hannibal of Pontus, violent, cruel and clever like Jugurtha, was engaged, by using his prodigious treasures and exploiting the hatred which Roman financiers had aroused against themselves, in carving out a vast empire in Asia. Setting out from his kingdom of Pontus on the Black Sea, he conquered the Tauric Chersonese, Paphlagonia, Cilicia and other territories, brought together 300,000 men of all races and languages, and after terrorizing the Asiatic coast of the Archipelago entered Greece, where Athens served him as a base of operations. He boasted that he would arouse the Greek world against Rome at the moment when she had just come through the Italian revolt. He lost Athens, was surrounded at Chaeronea and at Orchomenus by Sulla (87–86) and, driven from Europe, was obliged to submit to a humiliating peace (Dardanus, 85) and to pay tribute. Eleven years later he recommenced the struggle and assembled 150,000 men and the requisite material. Lucullus inflicted sanguinary reverses upon him and pursued him into the territory of Tigranes, king of Armenia, but this expedition into regions where they had not previously penetrated was not a success for the Romans, and they were compelled to fall back. Pompey resumed the offensive, called upon the Parthians against the Armenians, imposed a heavy tribute upon Tigranes and brought Mithridates to the point of surrender. That Hannibal of the East put an end to his own life in 63 in his palace at Panticapaeum. Asia was pacified and Pompey succeeded without difficulty in converting Syria into a province, in carrying Jerusalem, in crushing the nomadic ancestors of the Beduins of to-day, and in proceeding to the complete consolidation of the region extending from Pontus to Taurica.

Five years after the death of Mithridates, Caesar entered Gaul. Since the year 118, the Romans had been neighbours of this vast region which contained 80 seething peoples divided by territorial jealousies and factional strife. Between the towns of Narbonensis and the tribes of Cetica and Aquitania—Belgica being more remote—relations had existed for a long period. It was known that the agricultural and mineral resources of the valleys of the Loire and the Garonne were considerable : the inhabitants of Marseilles conducted a fairly extensive trade with the Bituriges and with other peoples who excelled in metallurgy as well as with the industrial centres, such as Bibracte, where manufacture on a scale worthy of the name was practised. The fleet of the Veneti, which was the vehicle of traffic with the western portion, had hardly an equal in the Mediterranean and surpassed all those of the Atlantic. The *publicani* clamoured for the conquest of these populous and wealthy regions which held out the promise of fruitful exploitation and might well become for them a new Asia. To these economic motives were added the ambitions of Caesar who dreamed of acquiring fame as a step to the dictatorship of Rome. The Gallic war lasted for seven years, during which time the legions also descended upon Britain and crossed the Rhine. They spread over an area of several hundred thousand square miles where no Latin had ever ventured before. In 51, some months after the capitulation of Vercingetorix, Gaul had been subjugated. How many lives had this subjugation cost ? Hundreds of thousands, perhaps a million.

Caesar was more fortunate than Crassus, who, crossing the Euphrates, attempted a wild expedition among the Parthians in 53. The unfortunate general lost three-quarters of his legions and succumbed himself. At the end of the Republic, the Euphrates was still the frontier. The annexation of Egypt in 30, shortly after Actium, closed the circle of Roman possessions around the Mediterranean. For the future this sea was but a basin subject to a single dominion and whose every coast obeyed the will of the master of Rome.

The countries which were added subsequently to 264 to the nucleus composed of Latium, Etruria and Samnium

were the following : Sicily (241), Sardinia and Corsica (241), Hispania Citerior or Tarraconensis (197), Hispania Ulterior or Baetica (197), Narbonensis (118), Gaul (whose three provinces of Aquitania, Lugdunensis and Belgica were not constituted until the beginning of the Empire), Dalmatia (59), Macedonia (146), Achaia (146), Asia (133), Bithynia and Pontus (74), Cilicia (64), Syria (64), Egypt (30), Crete (74), Cyrenaica (67), Africa (146), and Numidia (46). The Empire was still to annex a number of Alpine cantons, the districts of the Rhine and the Danube, certain regions of Asia Minor, Arabia, Armenia, Assyria, and Mauretania, but the extensions of territory which followed were not comparable—vast though they were—with the prodigious conquests accomplished during the last two centuries of the Republic.

The territories under Roman dominion in the year 30 covered at least 1,900,000 square kilometres (742,000 square miles) in Europe, 600,000 square kilometres in Asia, and 440,000 in Africa, in all nearly three million square kilometres or more than a hundred times the area governed by the Senate on the eve of the first Punic war.

In this territory the countries which had been subjected to the direct influence of Greece and had received the imprint of Greek civilization, and also those which had combined the civilization of Greece with the inspirations of Asia occupied a considerable place—more than half a million square miles. We shall see that they were to predominate in the matter of density of population over the other portions of the Roman world and the reader will easily conceive that they imposed in their turn upon this gigantic juxtaposition of races, customs, needs and habits some of their own psychological features and certain of their tendencies and activities. He will understand what a revolution this annexation of millions and millions of men, who represented an infinite diversity of nations, was to accomplish in the economic life of Rome.

CHAPTER II

DENSITY OF POPULATION

WHAT were the numbers of those in enjoyment of the *jus civitatis*, or of portions of it, or simply in subjection, in all the territories administered by Rome at the various epochs of this period ? This is clearly a problem of essential importance, for the economics of production and exchange differ radically according to whether one is considering a half-deserted country or a fully populated one. We have a few data and also some opinions but we are quite without detailed statistics comparable with those which are so necessary in modern economic life. The reader will find here the statistics which we have been able to glean either from the historians of antiquity themselves or from the writers of the last century, who made use of all the scattered documents with which they met and also proceeded by more or less conjectural deductions. We must therefore not be surprised if widely differing figures are cited in the outline which is to follow.

The number of Roman citizens increased without cease from 264 to 30 B.C. : it continued to do so—and at a faster pace—until the edict of Caracalla in 212 A.D. which conferred upon all the inhabitants of the Empire the distinction which had hitherto been so much disputed and so highly prized. It should be noted that it was above all at the beginning of the first century that the contingent of *cives* increased, after the entry into force of the Julian law and the Lex Plautia Papiria (90 and 89) and of the *senatus consultum* of 87 which gave full rights to the Italians.

We know from Livy that the census showed 137,000 fathers of families in 264 and 214,000 in 202. But the number of fathers of families was not of course the same as that of *cives*, which was necessarily higher. According to Beloch, there were 292,000 citizens in 264, 312,000 in 169, 394,000 in 115, 463,000 in 85, and 910,000 in 70, but by that time full prerogatives had been generously distributed throughout

the Peninsula. If we examine this growth and select certain outstanding dates, it would seem that there were no phases of standstill or diminution. Nothing could be more misleading than this impression. It is certain that, from the second century the birth-rate greatly diminished and that at the same time wars abroad were digging deep clefts into the legions which were composed of citizens. In 159 Rome counted 325,000 men capable of bearing arms and this total fell to 322,000 in 147 and 310,000 in 131. The creation of new citizens did not increase the density of the population and one must not be misled by mere totals. In the first century the civil wars and the proscriptions made deserts of certain areas and mowed down adults in their thousands. Fifty thousand were left lying in 82 before the Colline Gate, 12,000 were massacred at Praeneste by order of Sulla. In 43, Octavius, Lepidus, and Antonius engaged in horrible slaughter which greatly reduced the number of *equites* and senators and caused equal ravage among the masses. Furthermore, during the whole period which extends from the Social War to Actium, celibacy became almost an institution and such marriages as there were grew less and less prolific.

Polybius states that in 225, that is to say in the interval between the two struggles with Carthage, Italy contained 3,500,000 free men. Dureau de la Malle estimates the population in 204 at 2,700,000 free men and 2,300,000 slaves. He allots 2,500,000 men to the first category in the year 70 B.C. Beloch suggests that there were 2,700,000 free men at the end of the third century and four millions in the first. Mommsen generously allows Italy twenty-one million inhabitants at the time of the consulate of Cicero—one-third free and two-thirds slaves.

If we admit the mutually consistent figures of Beloch and Dureau de la Malle for the years of the supreme struggles against Carthage, between 264 and 202, the density of a square kilometre in the Italian peninsula would have been 21 excluding slaves and 39 including slaves. It was thus very low (the figures correspond approximately to 54 and 100 respectively per square mile) if we compare it with that of the beginning of the twentieth century.

Beloch has attempted to calculate this density district

for district. He allots 140,000 free men, at the time of the Punic Wars, to Campania, which would thus have shown a density of 140 per square kilometre, 200,000 to Etruria—a density of 15—1,750,000 to Latium and the remainder of central Italy—a density of 29, and 600,000 to southern Italy —a density of 13.

Cisalpine Gaul in the third century formed as it were a country apart and the Romans only entered it later. Hannibal found it full of marshes and forests and it was hardly until after 110 that the main work of clearing began. In the year 50 the country was still uninhabitable from Bologna to Mantua. Investigations which have been made lead to the conclusion that the cities were relatively unimportant, even in the time of Cicero. Verona only covered 45 hectares (110 acres) and Bologna 83 (200). At the present day Bologna is five or six times as large. Beloch considers that Cisalpine Gaul, with nearly 100,000 square kilometres, did not at the end of the Republic contain more than 875,000 inhabitants, or less than 9 per square kilometre.

The same author has endeavoured to assess the population of the main areas of the annexed territory, or at least of certain of them, for the period with which we are concerned. Greece, which he believes to have had four million inhabitants in the days of Alexander, had certainly lost a considerable proportion of them during her internecine struggles. The region with Carthage as its centre is considered to have supported three or four millions before Zama, the metropolis alone holding as many as 700,000 persons within its walls : but this region was also devastated by war. Egypt is thought to have had seven million inhabitants in the first century and Alexandria alone 500,000.

Beloch has drawn up a complete scheme of the area and population of the Empire at the death of Augustus. No very noticeable fluctuations seem to have taken place between the years 30 B.C. and 14 A.D. If we accept the figures which this economist has collected, Rome—immediately after Actium and without the provinces which Augustus annexed—could count more than fifty million men. Thus the density would have exceeded 16 per sq. km. But the Levant alone was responsible for some twenty-six millions of the total and its density was more than three-fifths above the average.

Egypt alone counted 250 inhabitants to the square kilometre, Cyrenaica 33, Syria, with her cities—Antioch, Seleucia, etc.—55, Cyprus 50, and the province of Asia 44. The population of the Gauls, Corsica, Sardinia, and Africa seems very small in comparison with that of the countries of the eastern Mediterranean where opulent cities were relatively numerous.

CHAPTER III

THE CIVIL WARS

THE class struggles in this second period of Roman history followed much less simple lines than in the first. A new factor was present—side by side with and in the face of the ancient landed nobility there was an increasing equestrian order which had enriched itself by exploiting the wars, by trade, industry, usury and by the system of concessions, and was tending to predominate in the land. This order of *equites*, naturally hostile to the senatorial patrician class, whose privileges it wished for itself, attempted to seek support among the ever-growing *plebs* of the capital; then, when the mob became too menacing and their riches seemed in peril, the *equites* once more turned towards their late enemies.

Nevertheless, in spite of the agrarian laws, the middle class was rapidly disappearing and, as we shall see later, their landed property went to swell the *latifundia* which had been set up on the ruins of the system of agriculture practised on a small scale. The disproportion between fortunes was enormous and even scandalous from the beginning of the first century. It was then that the Italians, no longer willing to be ground down without mercy, revolted and obtained the *jus civitatis* which furnished them with at least a rudimentary guarantee. At the same time, too, the armies of Praetorians, ready for anything and devoted to their chiefs so long as they were allowed to pillage, took the place of the legions of citizens of the earlier days: for seventy years the Peninsula was visited by blood and fire, as the result of the conflicts between opposing generals, and terrorized by minor chiefs, each with an axe to grind.

We may here mention briefly these events in domestic history: the power of the equestrian order increased with growth of production and exchange; the Social War, by bringing about "Italian unity" as a result of the equalization of rights in the whole central and Mediterranean regions

of the Peninsula, raised at the same time the hundreds of thousands of heads of families to a less precarious economic level; the internecine struggles which began at Rome under the Gracchi and after a phase of reaction and pacification were renewed under the triumvirate of Saturninus, Glaucia and Marius—to extend to the provinces and to cease only on the eve of Actium—paralysed industry, hampered trade and threw the countryside into panic. They brought to a standstill the growth of public wealth and precipitated the rural exodus and in consequence the concentration of landed property.

We will not seek here the origins of the order of *equites*, which have been much disputed. The *census* or fortune which a Roman citizen must possess for admission into this class was at first 100,000 asses, but the figure was multiplied by ten at the end of the first Punic war and it is estimated that the fortune required towards 240 corresponded to about £3,500. If we wish to measure the progress made at Rome in the matter of wealth generally in the middle of the third century we may consult the assessment suggested by Polybius for the year 226 : according to him there were 22,000 *equites*, so that one-twelfth of the Roman citizens on the lists were in possession of the necessary minimum. The proportion seems excessive for a period when coin—although much more was in circulation than a hundred years earlier—was not yet very abundant.

The equestrian order was at the beginning hardly distinguishable from that of the senators. A rigorous differentiation was, however, established by prescriptions which were contemporaneous with the second Punic war. The ancient Romans were notoriously disdainful of commerce and of anything relating to business and the patricians felt that they could best avoid being placed in derogatory situations and keep their prestige intact by establishing themselves in agriculture and in the exercise of public functions. Extremely strict laws — so strict indeed that they were probably not respected to the letter—forbade senators to build boats of more than 300 amphoras—an extremely small displacement—and also to enter into contracts with the State. The only practical effect of these laws was to increase the importance and the wealth of the

equites, before whom there opened an infinite vista of transactions, honest and otherwise. Not only were the senators, themselves rich, forbidden to introduce into Rome the wares of the East, the purchase and sale of which was highly profitable, but they were also excluded from bidding for standing timber, from the collection of taxes, from furnishing war supplies and from the particularly profitable business of exploiting conquered towns. By establishing of its own initiative the economic power and the financial domination of the equestrian order, the senatorial oligarchy, which was still resisting towards the end of the third century, was bringing into being a dangerous rival to itself and challenging political disturbances which were not long in arising. It offered the *equites* every chance of supremacy at the very moment when the uninterrupted extension of territory was arousing amongst them ambitions which were never satisfied.

In the internal as in the external policy of Rome, the equestrian order exercised an authority which grew incessantly from the Macedonian and Syrian wars to the time of Sulla. At the death of the dictator it again recovered part of its ascendancy. During the wars of Caesar and Pompey, of Octavius and of Antonius it passed from *rapprochement* with the consular party against the Senate to alliance with the Senate when the assaults of the mob and the attacks by the debtors frightened the owners of capital. But it had ceased to be more than a bargaining piece in the sanguinary conflicts of the leaders of armies.

Its period of splendour was the second half of the second century and it was still influential in the first few years of the first. Then it developed its imperialism, which the Senate opposed halfheartedly, suggested new wars and remote enterprises in order to increase the scope of its exploitations and to assure a magnificent booty for such of its members as had become publicans. It ruled by corruption and gave gold for the election of its nominees who subordinated to its appetites the administration of the public interests. And finally, thanks to the laws of Caius Gracchus, it seized the "*quaestiones perpetuae*" or courts having the duty of punishing corrupt practices and the wrongful use of public money. Until then, this magistrature, which was composed

of members of the senatorial order, inspired terror in the administrators who delivered provinces over to the publicans. By means of this body the old nobility was able to hold in leash the new aristocracy of wealth and its pretensions to govern Rome. Now, however, the equestrian order had nothing to fear for those of its members who might grind the faces of conquered populations, defraud the treasury or pillage the forests and mines of the State. In giving to the *equites* the right to act as judges, Caius Gracchus aggravated the conflict which had already broken out between the two aristocracies. In the year 122 the equestrian order began to appear as the real master of the city. It maintained its hegemony for forty years without challenge. But in 82 the victorious Sulla decimated it, killing nearly 3,000 of its number, and the survivors lost both the judicial powers which they prized so highly and the lucrative exploitation of the Asiatic concessions. Such was the revenge of the senators. Pompey and Crassus, associates in the Consulate of 70, divided the much-coveted magistrature between the two orders and restored the treasury of the *equites*. With the conflict of legion against legion, the class war lost much of its importance.

The common people who, throughout the second century, were demanding relief in money and victuals had for a time supported the Gracchi but had shortly afterwards fallen back once more into their former state of inferiority and misery. From time to time they were gratified by being allowed to witness some spectacular triumph. They were given occasionally a special ration of foodstuffs or even a monetary dole. But their rôle was secondary. Provided more or less with food, the mob remained a toy or a tool in the hands of the two oligarchies which struggled for power. They rarely dreamed of entering the struggle on their own account. In the civil wars of the first century they played but a nebulous part and the huge proletariat which seethed in the metropolis at no time pursued the dream of a social enfranchisement which they regarded as unrealizable. Catilina himself could only bring together small contingents in 63 and his bands were composed of fugitive slaves, of embittered veterans and of *déclassés* of every kind, rather than of artisans.

The Italian insurrection was contemporaneous with the

first wars of the factions and took place between the rupture of Marius with his late allies Saturninus and Glaucia and the dictatorship of Sulla—between 90 and 88.

The Italians had been the subjects of Rome for two hundred years and more. They complained that in spite of the services which they rendered and the devotion which they had shewn, in the face, moreover, of their oft-tried fidelity on the battlefield, they were still deprived of the *jus civitatis*. They protested still more that the regime under which they were placed was an intolerable one which gave them neither full political rights nor even uniform status and deprived them of legal ability to enter into contracts or exercise full rights of ownership. They denounced the heavy taxes, the forced labour and the contributions of all kinds which were imposed upon them and pointed out that the burden was becoming heavier rather than lighter as the years passed.

The subjugated peoples—Marsi, Vestini, Picentini, Samnites and Lucanians—had believed at first that their cause was bound up with that of the Roman *plebs* which, at the time of the Gracchi, was demanding to be allowed to earn a living by cultivating the soil. The agitation began with the latter half of the second century. In 91, the tribune Drusus proposed to confer Roman citizenship upon them *en bloc* but he was almost immediately assassinated. The Italians thereupon formed a confederation, the centre of which was Corfinium, renamed Italica, in the Abruzzi, and raised an army in order to obtain freedom from the oppression of Rome. Terrible fighting ensued and lasted for two years. The Senate, which had endeavoured to divide the insurgents, despatched Marius and Sulla against them and ended by giving to the whole of Italy the prerogatives which they so much desired. But thousands and thousands of men had fallen in the cruel struggle which had devastated central Italy.

Still more bloodshed characterized the wars of the Praetorians in which Marius was faced by Sulla, Caesar by Pompey, and Octavius by Antonius, successively—not to mention such minor personages as Clodius and Milo, for example, who showed themselves neither the least turbulent nor the least ruthless.

Until the end of the second century the legions were composed of men who were not soldiers by trade but who, on the day of peril, forsook their booths in Rome or their small fields outside the city to respond to the call of the city. These men were no lovers of war for war's sake, nor did they care for the profits which it might bring : they served less the general temporarily at their head than the State to which they owed blood-tax. Moreover, the Senate at all times kept a watchful eye on such of the more ambitious chiefs as might have been tempted to abuse victory in order to assume an illegal dictatorship. Whenever a consul gave rise to suspicion, the old aristocracy showed itself inflexible.

The reform which Marius accomplished during the war of Jugurtha was to call forth the gravest consequences. By substituting professional armies for the legions and recruiting not citizens fulfilling an obligation but volunteers attracted by the hope of pillage and of easy gain, he revolutionized the foundations of public life. But this reform itself seemed to be imperiously demanded by the economic changes against which the Gracchi had in vain endeavoured to pit themselves, by the concentration of wealth in the hands of the equestrian order, by the almost complete disappearance of any middle class and by the increase in numbers of a proletariat which swallowed up those who were slowly being forced to abandon the cultivation of small holdings in the country.

It thus came about that the veterans who had no longer any link with the city and knew no other occupation than that of marching into enemy country, sacking conquered cities and massacring or capturing vanquished populations, became a permanent menace to the liberties which had been acquired. They never ceased to demand further expeditions to provide fresh pleasures and to enable them to enrich themselves with the spoils of kings and of peoples. Their chiefs could only keep them in hand by conceding their demands and providing for their material well-being, and once these chiefs had assured themselves of the personal loyalty of their troops, they trampled the laws under foot, overthrew traditional institutions in pursuance of their own ambitions and behaved not as magistrates elected for a definite period

of time and with a definite mission but as monarchs answerable only to their own desires. Senators and *equites*, artisans from the capital, disinherited plebeians who had lived on the *annona*, all social classes went to compose the medley which fought in the confusion of the Civil Wars. The strongest army made the law : it decimated the rival army, destroyed the property of the other faction and ruthlessly dispossessed such farmers, large or small, as had not embraced the cause of their general, had remained hostile to the idol of the day, or had merely observed neutrality. The period of the systematic devastation of Italy coincided with that of the great conquests of Asia Minor and of Gaul ; Rome enriched herself on the one hand and impoverished herself on the other. She gained subjects and lost citizens. The foreign wars increased her territory beyond the horizon, whilst domestic war laid bare the regions which had been annexed first.

Marius had begun the cycle of these great struggles by his alliance, and then by his rupture with Saturninus and Glaucia. In 88 a quarrel broke out between him and the other aspirant to the dictatorship, Sulla. The latter having left for Asia in 87, Marius and his accomplice Cinna organized at Rome a carnage which lasted for five days and five nights and spread little by little to the whole of Italy : innumerable confiscations and acts of spoliation were added to the butchery which was ordered or tolerated and the belongings of the victims were divided among the veterans. But Marius succumbed to his excesses ; Sulla, having come back to Europe issued formidable lists of proscriptions and seized the supreme power. He abdicated in 79 and died in the following year. Lepidus, who was scheming for his inheritance whilst Sertorius was leading a revolt in Spain, was crushed in 77 at the foot of the Janiculum by Crassus and Pompey. Sertorius was still fighting against Pompey, who had beaten him at Saguntum, when Spartacus and his gladiators took up arms in Campania. Pompey drove him out of Italy in 71. He then entered into an agreement with Crassus for the domination of Rome but he left for the East in 66 and Crassus negotiated with Caesar, who made use of Catilina as his agent. Cicero, who was Consul in 63, denounced and crushed this leader of armed bands. Shortly afterwards, Pompey, who had disposed of

Mithridates, set up a triumvirate with Caesar and Crassus. This union could not last for long and the rupture, which soon came, led to a terrible outbreak of anarchy: the adherents of Clodius and those of Milo became engaged in an attempt at mutual extermination. Such was the minor drama; the major brought Caesar and Pompey into opposition and had for its stage nearly the whole length and breadth of the Roman world: Italy, Spain, the neighbourhood of Marseilles, Epirus, Thessaly and, after the disaster of Pompey at Pharsalus (48) and his death which ensued in Egypt almost immediately, even the province of Africa.

Caesar, who remained the sole master, fell on March 15 in the year 44 by the daggers of Brutus, Casca, and their friends. The last period of civil war now began. Marcus Antonius and Lepidus united with a view to sharing the succession of the conqueror of Gaul. They were immediately opposed by the youthful Octavius and judged it more expedient to come to an agreement with him and to form a triumvirate (43) which issued pitiless proscriptions directed against both the senatorial and the equestrian orders. Octavius and Antonius having wiped out, at Philippi in Macedonia, the republican army of Brutus and Cassius, Octavius and Lepidus turned upon Sextus Pompeius who held the sea and was engaged in a food blockade of Rome by intercepting convoys. In 36, Lepidus was dispossessed of his prerogatives of triumvir and Antonius and Octavius were in opposition. The battle of Actium settled their quarrel. Antonius killed himself in Alexandria and Octavius was left in sole command of the 1,200,000 square miles which constituted the territory of Rome. The aristocratic and oligarchic republic, which since the time of Marius had been but an empty title—for the ancient institutions had been bereft of all authority by seventy years of civil war and the magistracies of the early days had been corrupted in their very being and shorn of power—had perished under the blows of the Praetorian armies. The Empire had gradually evolved throughout this crisis and its many vicissitudes. We have thus glanced at the historical framework within which the economic development of the Roman world was to take place for a period of 234 years.

CHAPTER IV

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LAW

THE various changes which were made in the higher offices of State during this second period have but a minor interest in their bearing upon the subject under consideration here. We are little concerned to know that Sulla nearly suppressed the powers of the tribunes and to a certain extent abolished the censorship, that Pompey and Crassus vigorously attacked the régime which Sulla had instituted, that the Senate was deprived by Caesar of the greater part of its influence whilst the *comitiae* shared with the head of the State their electoral prerogatives, or that laws concerning public security were added at the end of the Republic to the existing body of legislation. Industry, agriculture and commerce were only very indirectly affected by the various new schemes enacted successively by the triumphant dictators. A closer study may well be made, however, of the extension of the *jus civitatis*, the administrative system imposed upon the provinces and the transformation of private law.

We have already seen that the *jus civitatis* cannot be regarded exclusively as a mere aggregation of political attributes. Those of the subjects of Rome who obtained it—and it was granted very sparingly until the Empire—benefited in respect of contracts and of the exercise of rights of ownership by advantages which were associated at that time with fiscal privileges. It is thus easy to conceive with what tenacity the populations of the centre and the south of the Peninsula endeavoured to wrest it from their rulers. The Social War of the first century has already been outlined. In the year 90 B.C., the Julian law which was promulgated at the beginning of this domestic struggle conferred the *jus civitatis* upon all those Italians who had remained loyal and in 89 the Lex Plautia Papiria granted the same status to all Italians—whether they had remained loyal or had taken part in the revolts—provided that they came

to seek it in Rome. Two years later the desire to pacify for all time the regions in which insurrections had arisen and been quelled led to the promulgation of a *senatus consultum* which extended this measure to those Italians who had remained intransigent until the last.

During the short period in which he was in power, Caesar conferred the *jus civitatis* upon Transalpine Gaul. This was the only region which received it *en bloc*. Outside Italy, however, those towns which had shown especial loyalty to the metropolis were granted the same attributes. These towns were for the most part in Spain and it should be added that they had rendered personal services to the dictator. Italy at that time exhibited complete unity, but we shall see that this unity was lacking throughout the remainder of the Roman dominions until the third century, that is, until the intermediate phase of the Empire, when all the subjects of Rome became citizens and enjoyed a common legal status.

The development of the system of concessions is a characteristic of this period of Roman history and the power which was vested in the hands of the publicans from the second Punic war until the triumph of Octavius was not without its influence upon the economic life of the provinces. In this chapter we shall only consider a part of the rôle played by the publicans—the collection of taxes and the exploitation of the public revenues—but it was on account of the official mandate with which they were entrusted and because they were protected by the State that they were able to extend throughout Europe, Asia and Africa a formidable network of usury.

At the end of the Republic the provinces were confided either to propraetors or to proconsuls assisted by legates whose functions were many and varied. In reality, the governors were invested not only with administrative authority properly so called, but also with judicial authority, financial authority, and military authority. They might have wielded absolute power had they not been restrained by fear of the Senate and by the constitutions granted to the cities, whose autonomy frequently remained almost unimpaired.

The fiscal system in these provinces was relatively

complex: direct taxes, indirect taxes, monopolies even, and all the fiscal forms which we find in modern states, were in operation side by side. The land tax, fixed or on a sliding scale, was founded upon the eminent right of the victorious city and corresponded to an average of one-tenth of the yield. The customs duties, or *portoria*, varied in different districts and were usually levied upon exports as well as imports: mines, forests, quarries and salt mines were exploited in the name and for the profit of the Roman people whilst the *ager*—arable and pasture land alike—which the victorius generals had added to the territory of the Republic was leased at a rent.

A very large part of the revenue was collected in kind, the taxpayers handing over corn, oil, wine and other products in lieu of money. They fell in with this method of payment all the more readily in that it was less onerous for themselves and that currency was still rare in the third century. The Senate for its part had found this plan advantageous, for it permitted the ever-growing food demands of the capital to be met directly and with little expense.

The office of the *annona* had only to distribute the cargoes of grain arriving from Sicily and elsewhere and had not to take into account to any great extent the variations in current prices.

A large staff was, however, required for the purpose of collecting the treasury receipts, more particularly the contributions in kind, the machinery of such a fiscal system being more complicated even than that of our own day. The tax collectors, under the Republic, were not officials in receipt of fixed salaries or of emoluments based on their takings. They were tax-farmers grouped into syndicates who were responsible for the payment of a definite sum into the coffers of the Republic or for the supply to its granaries and storehouses of agricultural produce to an agreed amount. They were known as *publicani* and the name is continually appearing in the records of the historians, the writers of comedies and indeed of everyone who used a pen until the beginning of the Empire: nor can this surprise us if we reflect upon the considerable rôle played by these concession-holders both in the political and in the economic sphere and the formidable hatred which they inspired.

Their activities merge into those of the equestrian order, from whose ranks they were necessarily recruited and whose financial power they represented. We find their influence in the foreign wars which they used every means to provoke in order to extend the scope of their plunder and in the Civil Wars, in which their wealth was used to support whichever army commander seemed to offer the greatest guarantees. Their profits surpassed any moderate estimate, for they fleeced the subjected peoples without mercy in the certainty of being neither resisted nor hampered by the governors, who were at their beck and call and whose career they could ruin by a word. Any money collected over and above the amount assigned to them for collection in the official books was theirs by right and by a thousand tricks they exaggerated the demands of the Republic in whose name they were professing to act. The revenues derived from forests and mines, which they endeavoured to increase by means of inhuman practices, produced relatively little for the treasury but left scandalously high surpluses in the hands of the publicans. They represented capitalism in the highest degree, even at a time when accumulations of capital were still both modest and few, and by establishing themselves in all the provinces they finally constituted a huge semi-official administration with infinite ramifications which terrorized and crushed the official administration with its small staff and growing corruption.

We know that the tax-farmers had at Rome itself numerous points of contact in the higher circles of the political world and this is readily understood when we remember that they were the backbone of the equestrian order. Cicero in his letters and his forensic speeches refers to them in appreciative terms and with an emotion which at times even breaks into lyricism. In 62, he wrote to his brother: "To take part against the publicans is to alienate from the Republic and ourselves a body to whom we owe considerable obligations and which we have ourselves attached to the State". During his mission to Cilicia he took pride in receiving daily one of these financiers at his table. In his *Pro Lege Manilia* he raises a cry of indignation when recounting the slaughter of Roman men of affairs which Mithridates had ordered to be carried out from the Black Sea to the

Archipelago. "Throughout Asia, all these cities, solely upon a word written by the hand of this barbarian, saw on the very day on which the courier arrived citizens of Rome slaughtered, massacred and immolated to his fury." It is not his anger nor his useless repetition of words which astonishes us, but the homage which he pays to the plutocratic invasion of the publicans. "Our farmers-general, full of honour, deserving of recommendation for their noble sentiments even more than for their rank, have staked in this province their capital and their revenues." And he sighs over the unhappy fate of the *equites* who supplied the funds of the farmers' syndicates. "Every day", he writes, "letters arrive from Asia for the most respectable Roman *equites*, whose funds, invested in the taxes of the Republic, are exposed to incalculable losses."

Cicero may appear suspect, especially when he is pleading a cause, but others were not lacking to exalt as he did the services of the publicans and Livy praises their patriotism: nevertheless to do so was to be wilfully blind to the abuses and misdeeds which history has recorded and which remain undeniable.

The syndicates of tax-farmers composed a fairly large number of individuals and the *partes*, which represented the amount invested by each subscriber, were in the hands of the most divergent classes of the population. In general these financial syndicates received for a period of five years a charter to collect taxes, to execute work, or to exploit the land. One would undertake to develop, on behalf of the State, the whole resources of a particular region, another—especially in the rich provinces—limited its activities to one branch of the fiscal system. The director remained at Rome to negotiate if necessary with the magistrates concerned, to hush up scandals which might threaten, or to keep a watch on the development of new fields of enterprise in which it might be desirable to seek further concessions. An assistant director was sent to the area of the concession to direct such operations as required continual vigilance—for it was necessary to superintend large gangs of freedmen, of slaves, and also of free labourers. Furthermore, industrial or commercial undertakings and even the granting of loans at a high rate of interest were added to the missions with

which the publicans were officially entrusted. These syndicates may be compared in many respects with the chartered companies which were set up in the French, British and Dutch colonies in the 17th century, and which reappeared in the 19th in the French and Belgian Congo, on the bend of the Niger and in South Africa.

Their beginnings were small, like the territory itself over which, at the time of the Punic wars, the dominion of Rome was exercised. We know that in 215 several contractors combined and signed an undertaking with the Republic to supply the legions of Scipio in Spain. In the year 214, Postumus and Pompeius Veientanus, who had made a similar arrangement, conceived the idea of defrauding the treasury by scuttling their ships and subsequently claiming the value of the goods lost. The tribunes brought a counter-action and claimed a penalty of 200,000 asses. All the publicans united to support the defendants but Postumus did not escape being sentenced. This incident shews us on the one hand that the occupation of being a publican had already begun to spread and on the other that the syndicates were far from having acquired the extent and influence which they had a hundred years later. In 198 a financial group was given the customs of Capua and Puteoli (the modern Pozzuoli) which can hardly have been very profitable at that time: in 167 the mines of Macedonia had already been for some months in the hands of a consortium, for the Senate, frightened by the treatment which the contractors had inflicted upon certain "allies", decided to close the workings. In 142 the forests of Bruttium were handed over to syndicates of *equites*.

In the second century the institution was general and even universal. The forests and the pastures of Spain, of Transalpine Gaul, of Sicily, Sardinia and Carthage were conceded to publicans. The latter brought in from all parts, or nearly all, corn, wine and oil which were due as tributes in kind: this operation appears to have been one of the most lucrative which was entrusted to them. The Sicilians were obliged to furnish the food administration of Rome with 680,000 *modii* of corn and a distinction was drawn between the "first tithes" for which no payment was made

and the "second tithes" for which three sesterces per measure were given. The principle was that the grower declared his yield and upon this yield the contractors calculated their demands. When the magistrates were complaisant, as was generally the case, the amounts assessed were increased at will and the contractors were regarded as exercising moderation if they failed to demand more than one-hundredth, one-seventieth, or even one-fiftieth over and above the legitimate amount. If the inhabitants were unable to provide the amount required in due time, they were obliged to sign undertakings and, as the interest due often amounted to as much as 48 per cent, the debt became exorbitant, however short the delay might be.

It was above all in Asia, a rich province in which industry and agriculture were equally active, that the contractors plundered without restriction. We shall see later moreover what ravages usury, that scourge of the epoch, made from Cilicia to Egypt and from Syria to Pontus. When Sulla assumed supreme power he took from the publicans the concessions in Asia, where they had just claimed the enormous sum of £26,000,000, but this measure was some years later reversed by Pompey and Crassus.

It was not only the joint-stock companies with their numerous agents which caused such terrible burdens to be laid on agriculture and upon the whole economic life of the conquered countries: the governors sent out by Rome with powers so wide that they covered every kind of misdeed were also collecting great profits and making or remaking their fortunes in a few months. Verres was not the most shameless of these unfaithful magistrates who, far from Rome, carried out official pillaging and changed the most fertile districts into deserts: it is even very probable that others surpassed them in cynicism and rapacity. If his name rather than that of one or other of the praetors has come down to our time, it is because Cicero has immortalized him, because that great advocate and chief of the equestrian order wished to defend the publicans against whom Verres had come into conflict through disputing with them the booty taken from the Sicilians and finally because he made a far-reaching inquiry and brought to the light of day the evils of one of the great provinces of Rome—of the very one

in fact which contributed most directly and most abundantly towards the food supply of the city.

It would be necessary to read page for page all the Verrine orations to form an adequate idea of the methods which the envoys of the Senate applied to those who came under their administration and to appreciate the devices which they had invented for acquiring wealth rapidly. In Sicily, such robbery was much more easily carried out than elsewhere since the governor was responsible for collecting the wheat tithes, certain of which were handed over in the form of taxation by the holders of land whilst others were given in exchange for a small payment. Verres had found it expedient to keep for his own purposes all the money which he received from Rome. Doubtless the producers would not have dared to insist upon payment and to denounce the acts of the praetor had not the powerful company which exploited the Sicilian pastures had occasion to complain of his intrigues and injustice. It was calculated that Verres had misappropriated nearly the equivalent of a million pounds. How could all this plundering—which was not restricted to any one province but was proceeding everywhere and was unpunished whenever the magistrates and publicans combined to hush up the scandal—fail to slow down to some extent the economic effort of countries already devastated by wars at home and abroad ?

Nevertheless, as we shall see, these exactions did not completely paralyse the movement of goods : they could not kill the development of all the forms of commerce which arose out of the rapid growth of the subjugated territory, the juxtaposition in it of peoples of all races and the diffusion of Greek culture and Oriental luxury.

The trade between Rome and the remainder of the known world, the operations of the publicans, even, which took the most varied forms, and the ever-growing daily needs broke down the old rules of law. The development of economic activities in Italy and throughout the Mediterranean, led to a transformation in the legal system which may be mentioned here, though not in great detail. The peremptory rules and the solemn prescriptions of the first ages of Rome became less severe and eventually disappeared. The contracts of the time of the Twelve Tables, which were no longer

adaptable to the more frequent transactions of the second and first centuries, were succeeded by simple forms of contract, which no longer required the presence of numerous witnesses or the accomplishment of complicated rites. A clearly expressed agreement sufficed to give legal force to these contracts. The operations of lending and of selling, in particular, were freed from the formalities by which they had previously been impeded. The system of leasing became more and more current and as early as the third century, when Italians came in large numbers to reside in the capital, they took their houses on lease. Thus Roman society broke down the too severe restrictions under which it had lived until the Punic wars and provided itself with the more elastic institutions appropriate to the requirements of a more complex life. The economic revolution, favoured by the continued conquests, had abolished all the outworn conceptions which were based on the exclusive predominance of agriculture, upon the *gens* system and upon the divine right of ownership.

CHAPTER V

THE GROWTH OF PUBLIC WEALTH

THE public wealth of Rome grew in the same proportion as the Empire itself. The military expeditions gave the city—besides extensive provinces and an ever-growing number of subjects—vast deposits of precious metals. These riches gradually concentrated in the hands of the ruling class and constituted accumulations of wealth of astonishing extent. Money circulated with a rapidity hitherto unknown and the patricians of the early period seem singularly poor when compared with the leaders of the equestrian order in the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C.

The capitalism of antiquity was born of war and founded on violence: at Rome as in the Hellenic cities its origin may easily be studied, for there spoliation was not disguised under the appearance of legality and did not assume such multiple forms as to hide the sharp edges of its outlines. Gold and silver, which were imported into central Italy from the expeditions into Macedonia, Asia and Gaul at the time of the Punic wars, represented simply and solely the tribute of the conquered, the spoils taken from defeated chiefs and booty derived from the coffers of the towns. If the considerable sums which were thus torn from the nations brought under subjection had been distributed among the citizens, or if every citizen had obtained his share, public fortune would have increased and private fortunes would not have been unduly swollen. What happened, however, was that the contributions which the generals gloried in levying unfailingly gravitated towards the governmental aristocracy which found a thousand ways of appropriating them for itself at the expense of the masses of the people. The very play of the exchanges and the conditions under which usury was practised brought into the coffers of the oligarchy such part as it had not in the first instance claimed for itself.

We have certain data which permit us to judge of the extent of the war contributions which the victorious generals exacted from the enemies of Rome and of the sums which they put into circulation in the Peninsula. In the year 241 Carthage was condemned to pay £800,000 to the capital. This is very little in comparison with the indemnities stipulated by modern treaties of peace but much when we remember that the number of citizens of Rome was only a few hundred thousand. In 197, Flamininus, after Cynoscephalae, caused to be carried in his triumphal procession 3,714 lbs. of gold, 4,327 lbs. of silver and 14,514 golden "Philips". In 189, Scipio returned from Asia with 1,124 lbs. of gold, besides the crushing tribute which he had exacted from Antiochus. Aemilius Paulus, after Pydna in 168, carried off nearly £2,000,000 from Macedonia and Marius sent from Numidia, after the death of Jugurtha, 5,775 lbs. of silver, 3,000 lbs. of gold and 217,000 drachmas. Sulla despatched from the countries from which he had expelled Mithridates 15,000 lbs. of gold and 115,000 lbs. of silver, without counting the £4,800,000 which he extorted from the subjects of Asia. Pompey collected in the Orient £2,240,000 for the treasury and £4,360,000 for his friends, his officers and his soldiers. He raised from 50 to 135 million drachmas the amounts claimed from the Asiatics. The annexation of Cyprus produced £1,960,000. Caesar, according to the historians, only took £2,060,000 in Spain and as little as £400,000 in Gaul, but £12,000,000 in gold figured at the celebrations of his triumph after Pharsalus and Thapsus. He gave £189 to each of his soldiers—exactly four times as much as the legionaries had received from Pompey—and he took care not to forget the citizens, who each received 105 *denarii*. Octavius seized so much precious metal after the battle of Actium that the value of money dropped to one-half. A similar result followed the treaty which closed the first Punic war in 241 and enriched Rome by a part of the wealth of Carthage.

It has been calculated that between the battles of Zama and Pydna, £10,000,000 were introduced into Italy. When compared with the number of citizens at that time exercising their rights, this figure seems colossal, but in all probability it is too low and in any case it was above all in the 2nd and

1st centuries that currency was imported in large quantities. It was rapidly absorbed by the great financiers and by politicians who had no scruples in using their positions to exercise rapacity and plunder the treasury.

The capitalists of those days had not yet brought together such masses of gold as American multi-millionaires handle to-day, but any attempt to compare the fortunes of the Roman Republic with those of the beginning of the 20th century would be illusory for various reasons. Nevertheless, at the time of the Civil Wars, some were already reckoned in equivalents of half a million pounds, although the *census* of the equestrian order did not exceed £3,440 in the third century, which in its turn was enormously more than the sum required in the early epochs.

A publican could say openly " I have more gold than three kings ". Atticus, the friend of Cicero, who had inherited about £16,000, engaged in such lucky speculations by buying property at a distance, by training and hiring gladiators, by lending to monarchs and municipalities, by becoming a bookseller and publisher, and above all by practising the art of diverting inheritances that he finally found himself in possession of a revenue equivalent to nearly a million pounds. He did not, however, set an example of unbridled luxury, for his monthly expenditure for his table is estimated by some authorities at £6 and by others at £24.

Cicero himself, who received a dowry of £5,400, appears to have made £1,000,000. But he was the greatest advocate of his time and received gifts from grateful clients. He also exercised public functions. Whilst acting with probity—so his biographers assure us—he brought back £2,000 from his province of Cilicia, which he administered for a year. Crassus, in a very short space of time, increased his fortune from 300 to nearly 10,000 talents (£2,000,000) : thus his capital was nearly equal to the revenue of the Republic. Moreover, it became easy at the period of the proscriptions, to pass from comparatively poor—and indeed even from poverty-stricken—circumstances to opulence. It was sufficient to flatter adroitly the powerful personages of the day and to exploit with intelligence the condemnations which were pronounced one by one. The dictatorship of Sulla cost the equestrian order £4,000,000 which fell to the

patricians and generally to the friends of the dictator. A freedman bought for 2,000 sesterces an estate worth £240,000. Some further details shew how widespread the use of currency had become in the last years of the Republic. A senator who only possessed £34,000 passed as merely well-to-do and dowries of 25 talents (£7,400) were regarded as usual in the period which followed the battle of Zama. Finally, the very figure of the debts which certain of the leading figures of their day were able to contract is a witness to the wide diffusion of the precious metal. Caesar with his £280,000 was but a modest debtor as compared with Milo, the leader of hired ruffians, who found means to borrow £840,000 which he failed to pay back.

Thus the ever-renewed campaigns which lasted from the Punic wars until the conquest of Gaul, had completely changed the economic system. Rome had at her disposal an abundance of gold and silver which contrasted sharply with the penury of the early centuries. How could her whole material and moral life fail to be transformed by this sudden expansion of wealth—due, as it was, solely to the spoliation of the world ?

CHAPTER VI

LUXURY

IT was not only Greece who, in the words of the poet, "vanquished her victors": all the countries of the East which the legions crossed imposed upon Rome their tastes, their luxuries and their vices. The expansion of industry and commerce which set in half-way through the second century can hardly be understood unless we connect it with this diffusion of Greek and Asiatic influence. New needs arose among the great families which governed the State and whose chiefs had come to know more highly civilized regions and had frequented a more effeminate society on the shores of the Archipelago. At the same time as they sent to Rome the tribute and the spoils which filled the public coffers and thence passed into the hands of the equestrian and senatorial orders, the generals, who had overrrun Pontus, Cilicia, and Syria, and entered Armenia, brought back fruits hitherto unknown and edible birds the very names of which had not penetrated to the Tiber, and precious tissues incomparably more beautiful than the finest products of Graecia Magna.

It was inevitable that in the course of time these rude warriors, whose lodgings were narrow and crude, whose food hardly ever varied and whose dress remained rustic should be tempted by the habits of the populations of Greece and the Hellenic countries. The climate softened them and they drew trenchant comparisons between the grossness of life in Rome and the refined existence of the East. Victors, who could take what they would without rendering account, they accustomed themselves to new delights, absorbed little by little the artistic culture which passed like an inheritance from one generation to another even among the nations which had been conquered, invaded and terrorized successively by the kings of Macedonia and of Syria or by the tyrant of Pontus. The furniture of precious wood, the vases of rare stone, the intricately carved jewels, the

sumptuous carpets and the statues which embellished the public squares and private dwellings furnished spectacles with which, after the first surprise, they felt unable to dispense.

When, having accomplished their missions, the chiefs of the armies returned to their houses in Rome or to their villas in the Sabine country, their surroundings struck them as dull, rustic and old-fashioned. The marvellous goblets, the brilliant tunics, and the bronzes brought back in their train looked out of place in such modest dwellings. With feverish haste they changed everything around them. They tried to live in the plains of Latium the life which they had seen in the other continent and which had left such an ineradicable impression in their minds. They could permit themselves this attempt all the more readily in that they had become rich and had brought with them, together with masses of coinage and bullion, captive domestics to attend to their many and various needs. And, since all the citizens of the ruling class kept their gaze on these heroes of the day, all aspired to imitate them, to exhibit the same pomp and to shew the same spirit of refinement: little by little the foreign influences and the teaching of the vanquished penetrated throughout the length and breadth of the country about Rome.

The ensuing transformation was a far-reaching one and aroused the indignation of the moralists of the time. They already foresaw the ruin of a Republic sapped by ostentation and invaded by vice. They denounced the triumphant prodigality, the intrusion of Greeks and Orientals, of rhetoricians, professors, barbers, mimics and dancers who were soon to assume paramount importance in the great houses; they denounced the corruption of the old spirit of simplicity and energy and the disappearance of all that had created, preserved and confirmed the power of Rome. Cato the Elder—after the wars of Macedonia and Syria which had enriched the city by the tributes of Philip and of Antiochus, opened the floodgates to a multitude of slaves and sown the seeds of a new crop of domestic expenses—fulminated against the increasing depravity of the age.

Long before he gave vent to his anger, sumptuary laws had been passed with a view to restoring the old standards.

The object was not, however, attained. As early as 275, Rufinus was excluded from the Senate because he had a silver table service, even though a poor one; but in 225, between the first and second Carthaginian wars, silver ornaments were used to adorn the trappings of horses. Nine years later, after Cannae, the magistrates forbade golden ornaments, private chariots for town use and multicoloured garments. They were obeyed for a few weeks only, and Asia had not yet been completely traversed by the legions. It may be imagined with what subjects for indignant protest daily life furnished Cato when he was censor in 184.

His wrath was in vain, however. He inveighed against the cupidity of men, against feminine luxury, which he said was growing in proportion as Rome flourished, he made far-reaching cuts in the senatorial and equestrian rolls with the purpose of excluding those whom he deemed unworthy, he imposed a supertax upon such articles as appeared to him unnecessary. When he ceased to hold office as censor a statue was raised to him in gratitude " for having raised the Republic, which the decay of morals threatened to destroy ". But his speeches convinced nobody and corruption continued to reign, whilst fashions imported from Asia gained fresh adherents daily.

The conscience of the magistrates, both civil and military, ceded to the passion for luxury, for the possession of much treasure was essential if rank were to be maintained and possible rivals outshone. Jugurtha, and after him Mithridates, knew the price of a general, a judge and a legate. That they resisted the Senate for so long was again due to their mastery of the art of buying the closed eye or even the helping hand. The taste for luxury killed the last scruples.

The forms which this luxury took in Rome during the last centuries of the Republic may be shortly noted here, for otherwise we shall find difficulty in understanding the part played in agricultural life by the farming of rare birds and exotic fruits and the rapid progress of certain new industries in the Peninsula.

During the period of history immediately following the first expedition to the East, rich Romans began to build extensively in the capital and in the country. It was, however, chiefly in the first century that this craze for house

property took root most firmly. Every senator and every member of the equestrian class had his house in Rome and elegant villas in the mountains or on the coast. We know that Cicero had several residences, that Clodius, one of the most fiery agitators in the Civil Wars, had built a superb house for himself near the Forum and that Lucullus, the contemporary of both, poured out uncounted gold to build his palace near Naples.

The luxury of the table, which more than anything else provoked the indignation of Cato the Elder, certainly surpassed anything which can be imagined at the present day. One must study the habits of the first century to comprehend to what depths of stupid gluttony humanity can descend. The rich men of the day spent fabulous sums on food for themselves and their friends. In imitation of the kings and great men of Asia they had sent to them at enormous cost animals and other dishes difficult to obtain, the whole value and savour of which lay in their rarity. Lucullus, no doubt, spent less on a single repast than Cleopatra who during her liaison with Antony expended the equivalent of £50,000 in a single evening, but he boasted of having paid his cooks £1,600 for a banquet. He also took pride in the fact of having pierced a mountain in order to bring sea-water to his fishponds, which were as famous as those of Crassus, Philippus, and Hortensius. As much as £100 could be paid for a single sturgeon or mullet.

Peacocks, wild boars, thrushes, guinea-fowls and Colchian pheasants were the daily fare of the great financiers and of the generals who had made fortunes by their campaigns. Expensive undertakings run in connexion with their domains furnished these luxuries, or *recherché* dishes were obtained from specialists whose prices were never questioned and who earned large incomes by their trade. From the year 171 Rome had bakers and shortly afterwards confectioners. Division of labour was practised when requirements became more exacting and the simplicity of earlier days disappeared.

Eating and drinking played a large part in the expenses roll of this plutocracy which governed the world at the end of the Republic, but value was attached also to the display of splendid gold and silver work, to the personal use of

objects of those metals alone, to the wearing of large rings and to the exhibition of wealth in all aspects of life. Beds with bronze ornaments and brocaded carpets replaced the former rough furnishings, purchasers were not lacking for tables of cedar-wood and murrhine vases at prices which to us seem out of proportion to their real value. There was a ready market for the innumerable perfumes, the cosmetics and the gems of Asia.

Scipio Africanus had a precious stone made into a seal and Caesar gave to Servilia, the mother of Brutus, another stone estimated at 6,000,000 sesterces. This exaggerated luxury extended into the realm of dress (Lucullus had 200 purple mantles), to public spectacles (Scaurus, who was appointed aedile in the year 58, constructed a wooden theatre which held 80,000 persons and was ornamented by 300 columns and 3,000 marble statues) and to household employees (Crassus, Lucullus and their kind kept captive singers, dancers and actors). It was impossible to restrain the excesses which from year to year had become more scandalous. The Law of 161 which forbade the cramming of pullets was turned into derision. When Caesar, 115 years later, wished in his turn to shew firmness by prohibiting the wearing of purple and pearls, nobody obeyed. He was in truth little qualified to recommend economy, having himself for so long practised the most outrageous waste. Thus during the 200 years which preceded the Empire the Roman oligarchy had become transformed to the point of denying the traditions which more than five centuries of history had inculcated. Conquest, which had brought territories, subjects, and gold, had led Rome away from the heroic simplicity of the Servian epoch.

CHAPTER VII

THE GROWTH OF THE SLAVE SYSTEM

THE economic revolution, which took place between 202 and 30 B.C. corresponded to a continual increase in the servile population. The very abundance of slave labour explains the changes which came about in methods of production at the time of the Gracchi and took still firmer root as Republican institutions declined. On the one hand the *latifundia* could not have been exploited if their holders had not possessed great troops of slaves and on the other the division of labour could not have been practised, even to the limited extent to which it existed, unless prisoners of war and skilled artisans bought in the markets of the eastern Mediterranean had been available to furnish industry with brawny arms and with technical skill of an order which was frequently highly developed. Rome, when she adopted the Asiatic taste for luxury and dress, took from Asia at the same time workmen to satisfy her new requirements. Nevertheless, this bodily seizure, although sanctioned by custom, was not without certain disadvantages and even perils ; we have already drawn attention to these and it only remains to add that they characterized above all the second period of the present history. As the years passed, the Romans came to realize that the workman in chains was not the equal of the free worker, that his standards remained primitive and that he did not work with a will at the agricultural or manufacturing tasks assigned to him.

As in the preceding centuries, the great source from which servile labour was recruited continued to be the waging of war which led to the capture of tribes and of whole nations and threw thousands and tens of thousands of human beings into the markets where they were sold by auction. The generals boasted just as loudly of their captures of slaves as of the treasures which they had pillaged from the vanquished kings or the contributions which they had levied. The yoke was imposed successively upon the Carthaginians,

the Sardinians, the Cisalpine Gauls, the Syrians, the Macedonians, the Epirotes, the Achaeans, the Cilicians, the Paphlagonians, the inhabitants of Pontus and others, the rough adversaries whom Marius defeated on the Lower Rhone and those whom Caesar thrust back in Belgica. All races, Hellenic and Germanic, Phœnician and Iberian, were thrown together pell-mell in this terrible subjection of the conquered.

A few figures may be quoted to shew the extent of depopulation suffered by the countries which were conquered or reconquered. Ten thousand allies of Hannibal were captured in 210, 30,000 others in 209, 4,000 in 208, 5,400 in 207 after the battle of Metaurus, 1,200 in 202, whilst 35,000 Carthaginians were enslaved after the treaty of 201. Flamininus sent back 5,000 captured Macedonians in 197 after Cynoscephalae, 80,000 Sardinians were deprived of their liberty in 177 and 150,000 Macedonians and Epirotes in 167. Scipio Aemilianus carried off 55,000 men and women after the great assault of Carthage in 147. It is no exaggeration to say that Aemilius Paulus sold Epirus by auction and Nicodemus of Bithynia spoke the truth when he replied to a request made by Marius for auxiliaries that all the Bithynians were in irons. No country, however, suffered such a fate as Caesar reserved for Gaul: 40,000 warriors were enslaved at Alesia, 55,000 at Namur, whole cargoes of Veneti were consigned to Narbonensis and to Rome and in all a million Gauls were handed over to the traders who followed in the wake of the victors and undertook to sell the captives at a large profit. For the slave traffic, provided with its raw material by war and also by piracy, or more simply by the caprice of owners, was one of the most lucrative trades.

It was above all in the Eastern markets that this human flesh was concentrated and exhibited. The traders who recruited for the *latifundia* of Sicily, Africa or Northern Italy were always certain to find there the low-caste and vigorous slaves whom the great agriculturists desired. They found there too the captives with brilliant intellectual qualities and those of comely form and elegant bearing much sought after in the fastidious circles of the capital. The Thracians were taken to Chios, the Scythians to Tanaïs, whilst Greeks and Asiatics poured into Ephesus and Samos. Athens was the centre for gifted slaves—the rhetoricians,

poets and mimics whose talents could be employed to provide entertainment at the banquets of the well-to-do. The Cilician pirates who were pursued by Rome on several occasions and who skimmed the Mediterranean and its coasts brought supplies of slaves to Phaselis and to Side in Pamphylia, the latter of which was their base of operations in the middle of the second century and the warehouse for the victims of their abductions. It was Delos, however, that remained for the longest time the chief centre of the slave traffic: 10,000 dungeons were always kept ready there to receive inmates. Whatever might be the qualifications sought in a slave, the journey need never be made in vain. Captives from Asia Minor were exchanged for those of Gaul and of the Alpine regions: the number of transactions reached enormous figures and it was not until very much later that Rome succeeded in seriously threatening the semi-monopoly which her island rival had acquired after the decline of Rhodes. When Cato the Elder went to the Subura to sell or to buy men or women, there was not offered to his eyes the spectacle of columns of prisoners which Caesar was later to exhibit to his contemporaries. But the actual details of the trade changed little throughout the ages and hardly varied in different countries.

The *servus* (slave) was brought, his feet whitened with chalk, to the public square: above his head was hung a placard giving particulars of his origin, qualifications and any special talents which he might possess. From time to time a herald declaimed in a strident voice the merits of the wares thus exhibited to the public for hours at a time. The prospective purchaser was allowed to handle the unfortunate beings whom he was recommended to buy and he examined them as to-day an ox or a cow is examined—without any respect for human dignity, which indeed, according to the conceptions of the time, could only attach to free citizens. The contract was then concluded and the purchaser could carry off his new acquisition just as he would an animal or plant. Fathers were separated brutally from daughters and wives, if—as often happened at the end of a war—whole families were offered for sale. And in order to allow for all eventualities—for the Romans were an essentially practical race—the law permitted purchasers who felt that

they had been unfairly treated to take action against the dealers for fraud or defects discovered subsequent to purchase.

It would have been interesting to have found complete statistics of the transactions effected at Delos, Rome, Side, and elsewhere, but we know that the keeping of statistics was hardly to the taste of the men of that day. As to the actual prices fetched by this human cattle information is rare and contradictory. It is, however, sure that in the third century slaves of the ordinary run, of average strength, were relatively expensive and that in the first century the very influx of slaves, by increasing the number on the market, led to a considerable drop in prices. In this matter, the historians and comic poets have bequeathed some figures to us.

According to Livy, Hannibal, wishing to put to material advantage his victories after the descent into Italy and finding his prisoners an encumbrance, sold at ridiculously low prices the Romans captured at the Ticinus, the Trebia, Lake Trasimene and Cannae. A cavalryman was worth about £15, a legionary a little less than £10, a freedman armed and incorporated in the cohorts £3. These were the minimum prices, but it must not be forgotten that the purchasers were not citizens of Rome, but consisted solely of the enemies of the capital and that in consequence the demand was small.

Cato, a master of the art of exploiting servile labour, rarely gave more than £40 for a first-class domestic servant. Some authorities quote him as paying £44 while others mention £46 10s. 0d. and even £52, but the common class of servant fetched but a third of these prices at that time and Beloch considers that their average price reached the low figure of £16.

Nevertheless, even at the beginning of the second century there were luxury slaves chosen from among the Macedonian and Greek contingents. It may be calculated that the most sought-after found purchasers at £72 and even £80 and Plautus, who belonged to the generation preceding that of Cato and died in the year of Cato's censorship, cites examples of women priced as high as 199 guineas. The time had not yet arrived when a Greek beauty or an Asiatic boy would be bidden for at fabulous prices by the lords of the period, vain of such

prizes—nor was a vine-dresser rated at £80 as in the time of Columella. Still, a slave represented capital. It is true that, although in general this form of labour might appear costly, captives from certain regions might be had for a few sesterces. Lucullus brought so many captives back from Pontus that the price of an individual became fixed at about the equivalent of three shillings and fourpence.

Nothing, however, was more unstable than these prices. They varied with the abundance of the harvests, with industrial requirements and with the nature and extent of the military campaigns by means of which the Republic was supplied with the indispensable labourers. They varied, too, with the age, size, origin and with the physical and intellectual gifts of the individual. Fashion also made its influence felt, falling at one moment upon a particular race as most suited to a given task, then suddenly and for no apparent reason veering round towards another. In this matter we must deplore the absence of reliable data upon which serious deductions might have been based.

The number of slaves began to rival that of free men soon after the Carthaginian wars. Although Valerius Maximus tells us that in the fifth century of Rome—that is to say, at the moment when the great conflict was beginning—the captives had not yet been accumulated in immense numbers, other historians offer us, in respect of the epoch which followed immediately after, totally different conclusions. According to Polybius, Italy at the time of the Macedonian expeditions counted five and a half million *servi*. According to certain writers of antiquity, a million and a half slaves worked on the land towards the year 190 B.C. and it is known that the rural population was at that time greatly in excess of that of the towns. The same sources assess the number of servile workers at the end of the Republic at 4,500,000.

Modern economists have in general reduced these statistics on the ground that they are exaggerated. Beloch considers that the capital contained about 400,000 slaves at the time of the final triumph of Octavius: he quotes the same figure for the number employed in Sicily at the middle of the second century B.C., whilst the total for the Peninsula he sets at a maximum of 1,500,000. Dureau de La Malle estimates the number of *servi*, *liberti* and foreigners at

2,312,000 in 225, and if we deduct the two latter categories, the *servi* could not have numbered two millions. This figure is much lower than that which Polybius quotes for the period a quarter of a century later but in its turn is higher than the one put forward by Beloch for a date subsequent to the great captures in Macedonia, Syria and Epirus.

The powerful tax-farmers who exploited the fields and pastures of Sicily often had at their disposal from ten to twenty thousand individuals. In the first century the more opulent of the *equites* boasted the possession of hundreds of luxury slaves. Atticus and Crassus, for instance, are known to have been lavishly equipped in this regard. In short, in the last phase of the Republic, the concentration of slaves —although certainly not as great as the proletarian concentration which characterized the beginning of our twentieth century and was brought about by different means—was very considerable ; so considerable indeed that agricultural and industrial production had already begun to operate on a large scale in the provinces and the capital and that a division of labour had gradually come about.

The servile population, adapted to the most varied uses, was infinitely subdivided. A large part remained on the fields, since the extensive cultivation which was gradually being developed called for enormous numbers of hands. As the science of improving the soil was hardly yet known, yields remained mediocre with the consequence that there was a continual endeavour to increase the arable acreage of the domains, and the exploitation of such of them as were of considerable extent called for compact masses of workers. In his treatise *De Re Rustica*, Cato estimates the number of men needed to tend about a hundred acres of vines at sixteen. The rich proprietors grouped together rustic " families " of considerable size in the *latifundia* which had been set up on the ruins of the small holdings. These families comprised, on the gigantic farms of Sicily and Etruria, a graded system of authority and a carefully ordered division of labour. At the head was the *villicus*, or responsible farmer, who was in command of all the other captives. These formed groups under the subordinate authority of the *monitores* or *magistri operum*. By the side of the unskilled labourers

there were also slaves who had specialized and whose numbers increased as the raising of game birds, the production of oil, the culture of the vine and horticulture replaced the primitive forms of agricultural activity. There were *bubulci*, *aratores* or *jugarii*, *subulci*, *domitores* (drovers), and *operarii*, in charge of the weeding operations, of haymaking and of clearing plantations. In the vineyards were employed *alligatores*, who tied the vines, *putatores* or pruners, *vindemiatores* or pickers and *calcatores* or grape-pressers. Among the shepherds—and according to the nature of their flocks—were distinguished the *armentarii*, *suarii* and *caprarii ;* the farmyard and enclosures gave employment to *hortularii*, *arboratores*, *curatores upiarii*, *curatores oviarii*, *curatores gallinarii*, *phasianarii* and others. The fishponds were under the charge of *piscatores*. The mere mention of all these titles shows that the numbers of men, with their almost infinite ramifications, were extremely great on the large estates.

The " urban families ", that is to say, the contingents which were retained in the towns, increased very rapidly with the new demand for luxury and with the passion for ostentation which now characterized the senatorial and equestrian orders. Here too there was a meticulous classification of services and status.

The slaves employed in domestic service properly so-called —that it to say, in the upkeep of the house, the preparation of meals or personal service, were, in the houses of the more wealthy citizens, under the orders of a sort of major-domo known as the *procurator* whose authority was in turn delegated to chiefs and lieutenants in command of groups of from 10 to 20 *servi*. A *dispensator* acted as treasurer. This organization postulates a high degree of luxury, but the Romans of the ruling classes made it a point of honour to increase their domestic staff without cease : it must also not be forgotten that in spite of the beginning or the development of independent industries many objects continued to be produced in the house. Thus, even after the opening of the first bakeries in the second century, the great preferred to eat bread baked in their own houses. Slaves were also called upon to weave and spin for the whole house although it was possible to purchase fabrics ready made.

So, in the town family, under the *procurator*, the *dispensator* and the foremen, if one may call them so, there were valets and chambermaids, stokers, men and maids of the bath chamber, butlers, cooks, sewing-women, grooms, coachmen, singers of both sexes, dancing-girls, poets, grammarians, mimes and actors; then there were porters, hairdressers, torchbearers, nomenclators whose duty it was to accompany their master on his walks or drives and to tell him, especially in election time, the names of passers-by whom he saluted; there were women whose special duty it was to watch over the wardrobe of the matron and others, entrusted with the keeping of her jewels, had to be at hand with the requisite perfumes and assist in the application of cosmetics. In the household of a Crassus or a Lucullus all nations were represented; a Thracian would be chosen for one task and a Gaul for another—a Greek to teach the children and a Lydian for the most menial tasks.

The urban family also comprised above all a mass of workmen of all trades. Here we touch upon the roots of the organization of Roman industry.

The rich were not satisfied with having their spinning, weaving and dyeing done in the household; their slaves also produced for sale outside it. They kept—either in their sumptuous dwellings in which special annexes were reserved for the purpose, or in the suburbs or villages near the town—potters, smiths, armourers, gold and silversmiths, tailors, and carpenters in varying numbers. All trades were invaded to some extent by this servile population which worked for the benefit of its masters. Those of the *domini* who did not wish to be obliged to set up workshops hired their slaves to third persons. Crassus, whose large fortune was notorious, was able to employ hundreds of captive workmen in every branch of production and to derive enormous profit from their exertions. Cato gave to his *servi* special education in order that they should acquire value as craftsmen and then hired them at a fixed tariff or sold them at a profit. He exploited thus *literati* and professors of grammar or of poetry whose fees he took. Atticus added to his income by the clever management of his copyists' studios which brought him fame as well as money. And, whilst the slaves in Rome excelled in the

liberal arts for their masters' profit, others were suffering atrociously in mines and quarries where they were gathered in thousands.

It must be remembered that the uses to which this servile mob might be put were of the greatest diversity: indeed we must explore the whole gamut of human activity did we seek to enumerate all their economic activities. Just as they raised peacocks or pheasants, the imitators of Lucullus and Crassus raised gladiators whom they sold to consuls, dictators and magistrates of all ranks for the great festivals which had become the order of the day in the last years of the Republic. Professional performers in the tragic fights which formed part of the public spectacles were sold at high prices when they were distinguished by exceptional dexterity. Prices rose still higher, between the epochs of Pompey and Octavius, as a passion for witnessing scenes of bloodshed seized a yet firmer hold upon the minds of generations who were incessantly locked in internecine strife. In a single day, under Caesar, ten thousand gladiators perished, their deaths enriching the masters who had provided and trained them.

After the fall of Carthage the Romans employed their slaves principally in commerce. Certain of these captives—of Phœnician, Greek or Syrian origin—belonged to races which had developed commercial aptitudes and gave proof of inborn talents which it seemed desirable to exploit. The proprietors, who felt it below their condition to traffic in goods or money, handed over to their slaves the management of their interests. They thus derived the double advantage of not using their own names and of benefiting by the cleverness and experience of their *institores* or agents. The latter participated sometimes in the profits—an additional spur to zeal in the business with which they were entrusted. We know that Cato, who did not wish to compromise himself by buying and selling, had recourse to intermediaries of servile status and this was also the custom of other senators who were forbidden by law to undertake transactions regarded as dishonourable.

By the side of the personnel employed in private enterprises there grew up a contingent of *servi publici* who were used in the administrative services of the State. They were

to be found in very large numbers immediately after the Punic wars when they were employed in the religious cult, in the various magisterial services, on the aqueducts, as firemen and as guardians of the public granaries. Their sign was the *limus*, or apron, and in the first century they had come to form veritable troops, capable in times of trouble of threatening the safety of the city.

It is certain that this expansion of the slave system, and above all of the rôle assigned to the captives was bound to lead to a progressive transformation of the law. The legal enactments evolved as the ruling class found it more advantageous in their own interest to increase the capacity of the slave.

At the beginning the slave was a chattel : he was given the right to conduct commercial operations and to contract debts on behalf of his master against whom the debtors had a legal right of recourse : when entrusted with a ship or put in charge of a business he entered into numerons contracts. He was given a sum of money which he administered as he saw fit, in which case his lot became remarkably better. One must refer to the works of the comic poets, in particular Plautus, to realize how the primitive laws, with their fierce solemnity, had fallen into disuse. In agriculture as in commerce, the servile employees, granted privileges by the master, acquired little by little a certain freedom of movement in the very interests of the latter. From the end of the Republic, they were free to exploit the land as cultivators, renting their holdings. True, they did not yet enjoy their liberty but the proprietors, who regarded this system as more advantageous, endeavoured to extend it, and the law which always gives expression to economic situations though it never creates them, registered these increasingly wide divergences from the conceptions of antiquity.

Manumissions, in spite of certain prescriptions to the contrary, multiplied without cease. They attained an average of 3,000 per annum in the third century and everything goes to show that they became still more numerous later. The relaxation of procedure in granting manumissions —for the necessities of society triumphed over the resistance and the hesitation of the magistrates—permitted the *domini*

to surround themselves with a lucrative clientele of *liberti* who in exchange for their liberation paid rent and assured the prosperity of the great houses even better than had the slaves to whom a little capital had been handed for exploitation.

The slave system was thus gradually remodelled whilst at the same time the treatment accorded to a section of these unfortunates was modified. It must not, however, be believed that the improvement was general, that liberal precepts of humanity were prevalent in the first century B.C., or that from that time the way was paved to a statute giving slaves the rights of real persons by conferring upon them some guarantee for the safety of their lives, at least, or affording safeguards against corporal punishment and torture. When the law brought alleviation, it was not for the sake of the slaves but for the benefit of the master who thought it profitable to revise the system of exploitation. In reality, two opposing tendencies were at work. On the one hand, in order to increase their incomes, the rich chose specially qualified and proved individuals for the town family, and even for that of the country: towards these individuals, to whom a measure of initiative was left, they showed a certain degree of consideration for the safeguarding of their own interests, which might have suffered from an attitude of violence. On the other hand, the great mass of slaves were treated even more rigorously than during the first centuries and this aggravation of their lot is explained by various reasons. Firstly, so long as the staffs of slaves increased, their relations took on a different aspect from that which had characterized the Servian epoch. The captive was no longer a collaborator with his master: he no longer shared his life and his roof but was, more often than not, under the orders of an agent who felt under an obligation to exercise severity and regarded the slaves as beasts of burden towards whom all licence was permissible. Just as under the old regime in France, the absenteeism of the landlords led to the worst of evils for the serfs, so in Rome at the end of the Republic the unchecked authority of the great freedmen who had been raised to the dignity of managers weighed with cruel severity upon the workers. The further servile concentration was pushed, the more

lamentable became the lot of those who were attached to the vast exploitations

Furthermore, less and less scruple was felt in ill-treating slaves in that they now came from far-away countries. As a measure of prudence some restraint had been shown in dealing with the Volsci, Aequi, and Samnites who were peoples of the Italian peninsula with rules of law, habits of life and a religion similar to those of the *cives*. Towards Syrians, Lydians and Gauls, despised barbarians bought in the market and utterly un-Latin, all was permitted. Thus the sentiments of humanity which the writers were beginning to express were hardly approved by more than an insignificant minority of owners who had attained a higher degree of civilization. Even in the capital the latter were rare, and it is on record that at the time of the Civil Wars the gourmets of the day fed their lampreys with slaves who had failed to give satisfaction.

Cato, who lived during a transition phase, has told us how he dealt with his own slaves, and the probabilities are that he was not the most inflexible of patricians. In the first place he believed in the maxim that slaves should "work or sleep", that is to say that he left them just sufficient sleep to renew their strength for the heavy tasks of the morrow. On working days they had to pass long hours in the fields. On other days the redoubtable censor assigned them subsidiary duties such as the cleaning of ditches, weeding, and the cleansing of reservoirs.

For dress they received every two years a tunic and a sagum, the old ones being, however, carefully put on one side for such use as could be made of them. Coarse nailed clogs were also supplied every two years. Their accommodation consisted of a sleeping-place on stable-straw by the side of the cattle or in a narrow and airless cell where a man could be chained if his fidelity were doubted or if the agent considered that he had behaved badly. The food offered to these miserable human cattle consisted of a horrible sour wine, in which sea water was a normal ingredient, of more or less eatable bread and of fallen olives. Each received an average of a pint of drink daily, a pint of oil each month and seventeen pints of salt yearly. We are not aware how much wheat was given to workers of the lowest class. The

women and the foremen, who also belonged to the servile class, received a monthly allowance of corn varying from $7\frac{1}{2}$ to $8\frac{1}{2}$ gallons according to the season. Food was neither abundant nor substantial. The upkeep of an agricultural slave—who, it should be added, received no regular salary—can hardly have cost £2 per year. It has been estimated at £1 19s. 0d. Cato, in paying his menservants a certain sum when they maintained liaisons with the maidservants, is a striking example of the practices of the *domini* of his generation. Nor, when they seemed too old to be of further use, did he hesitate to sell like old iron—the expression is his—men and women who had toiled for long years on his estate. Thus, nothing was wasted.

Yet Cato, hard and rapacious as he was, rose in the early morning to go to the fields, knew his slaves by name and worked at their side. The *latifundia* of Etruria and Samnium and above all those of Sicily were, however, places of torture for the workers. They were interned in huge barracks, specially constructed for them, and under the surveillance of armed guards day and night. They were treated worse than oxen or asses. Even when ill or exhausted, they were called upon to toil until their last breath. Under the domination of the publican's agents they were so numerous that their death went unobserved. Since they were not trusted—and rightly—the buildings in which they were huddled had very deep foundations and the windows were so high that it seemed impossible to reach them. Moreover, flight was accompanied by numerous perils for men who were branded on the forehead and limbs and large numbers of whom were kept perpetually in chains instead of only during the hours of work. If, after deceiving the vigilance of the special police of the *latifundia* and the mines, they succeeded in gaining the open country, danger still threatened them from all sides—above all, cold and hunger—for where could they find shelter without the risk of falling into the hands of the guards of a neighbouring *latifundium* or being refused hospitality by some humble peasant at whose door they knocked and who dared not admit them? If they were captured, death or prolonged torture awaited them, for, even when the law was made less harsh, the farmers-general of the State continued to apply for their own purposes

special regulations for which they invariably contrived to impose respect. If we study the condition of the servile population of vast areas of the Roman world, we shall understand why on numerous occasions they attempted to break their chains. The further we leave behind the third century and the dates of the first recruiting on a large scale, the more dangerous the revolts became to public safety and established order. The very increase in the number of slaves, which tended to approach that of free men, constituted a permanent danger and was a measure of the imprudence and the imperiousness of the men at the head of the State and of the avidity of the publicans who incessantly bought at Delos, Athens, and elsewhere fresh hands to serve in the development of their exploitations.

A characteristic and also very logical fact was that these slave risings—the importance of which cannot be exaggerated and which took on the aspect of inevitable social upheavals—broke out above all in those parts of Italy in which large holdings were preponderant and where the farmers of the revenue had been granted immense domains. The extreme concentration which, in our days, leads to the organization of labour led two thousand years ago to revolts on the part of the slaves. That they were always crushed after an offensive and a defensive which were sometimes very protracted—to the despair of the Senate—is due to the fact that they had little influence on events outside Sicily and the southern part of the peninsula. It must also be borne in mind that the rebels, whose ranks included men of every race and language, lacked cohesion and offered but feeble resistance after the first reserve. None the less, the Servile Wars shook the authority of Rome on more than one occasion and were only quelled after numerous efforts.

There was a mutiny in 198 in Latium, one in Etruria in 196 and a further one in Apulia in 185, but the rising of 140 which broke out in Sicily and spread throughout the greater part of that island was of unprecedented extent.

Its leader was a Syrian of Apamea, one Eunus, who attracted the simple-minded by tricks or wonder-working and held out to others the hope of bettering their lot. He succeeded in a few days in assembling 6,000 armed men whose numbers swelled to 20,000 a few weeks later. Generals

were sent against him successively, but, entrenched in the hilly region of Enna which served as the base of operations, he decimated the opposing troops. He is said to have commanded 70,000 *servi* at the end or even, according to some historians, 200,000. It is in any case certain that he became the effective master of the great island which supplied Rome with its agricultural products and that he inflicted cruel damage upon the publicans. Moreover, he found reliable lieutenants among his bands and for nine years he kept the Senate in check. Slaves having also risen during this grave period in certain centres of the peninsula, terrible punishments were inflicted, 150 being beheaded at Rome, 450 at Minturnae and 4,000 at Sinuessa.

This period at the end of the second century would also seem to have been marked by a general upheaval in the labour world. At Delos and at Pergamum, the merchants and the owners were hard put to it to restore obedience. At Laurium, where the mines were being methodically exploited, a rising put an end to their operation and led to rigorous punishment.

Sicily, however, did not disarm. After Eunus had been crushed, the captives of the *latifundia* pursued their clandestine organization which was facilitated by the growth of their numbers. In the year 103, at the very moment when the Cimbri and the Teutones were throwing themselves against the frontiers of Narbonensis, 40,000 slaves placed themselves under the command of Salvius in the east of the island and 14,000 others came, with another chief, from the districts of the west. Lucullus found it no easy task to overpower them.

Still more redoubtable was the rising of gladiators of Spartacus in the year 73 B.C. It will be remembered that the rich citizens kept professional combatants either for the purpose of providing spectacles for the public or for hire to new magistrates who wished to celebrate their assumption of office. A certain number of these gladiators rose at Capua near Naples—a very large town and a centre of both industry and luxury—and defied the first troops sent against them. The land slaves of Samnium and of Campania, whose numbers were great in that country of *latifundia*, and the drovers and shepherds of the Apennines, joined

them. Thereupon the government of Rome, learning that Spartacus was preparing to march against the capital, was terror-struck and sent a strong army with the consuls : they were, however, defeated. Licinius Crassus also suffered at first the general fate and it was not until the year 71 that Spartacus was killed and his bands dispersed. He had in vain appealed for help to the Sicilians with whom he was not able to communicate directly, but Rome had once more felt the perils of the slave system, which she then attempted to consolidate by crucifying 6,000 of the conquered. This sacrifice of human lives was little felt, for the markets of Europe and Asia were still able to provide all the hands which might be needed.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FREE ARTISANS

THE free proletariat increased its numbers between the third and the first centuries at the same time as the slave population. The two phenomena were connected—indeed it may be said that it was the growth of the slave element which led to that of the proletariat—but although the latter was daily adding to its numbers it played but a small part in the economics of production Rather did it become for the State an ever-increasing burden, for public order and the stability of the social system demanded that its members should be fed. It was found necessary to resort to an indefinite extension of the *annona* in order to compensate for the lack of work and the few available situations, the slave workers having monopolized the greater part of both town and rural labour, thereby relegating the *plebs*, who enjoyed civic rights, to a condition of incurable unemployment.

The ranks of this free proletariat were renewed from two separate directions. It absorbed on the one hand the new freedmen who, as we have seen, amounted to several thousand each year and, on the other, the small holders who had been expropriated by the economic evolution and torn from their native soil by the continual formation of *latifundia*. The peasants, who were obliged to sell their fields at absurdly low prices and no longer derived adequate subsistence from the soil which they tilled, went to the towns. They poured into Rome, but they also settled in the other cities which had grown up little by little in Campania, Etruria and the district south of the Po, hoping to gain a livelihood by practising some simple trade. The rural exodus began after the annexation of Sicily and increased when Africa became a Roman province, for these two granaries supplied the needs of the metropolis, and consequently the price of grain fell to a figure which was ruinous for the small producers. The former proprietors, thus deprived of their livelihood, found themselves less

and less able to obtain employment in the country where the increasing number of rustic "families"—recruited from the most varying regions and frequently well provided with experienced hands—met every need. It is true that Cato and the agronomists were recommending recourse to hired labour and demonstrating its superiority to servile labour. But their voices went unheard. The failure of the agrarian laws, which we shall mention later, and also the domestic troubles and Civil Wars, which helped to diminish and finally to remove the middle classes altogether, led to fresh emigrations *en masse* to the great centres. A confused army of small farmers, deprived of their fields and excluded from any share in the cultivation of the land, moved incessantly along the roads which led to Rome, where at least the food dole guaranteed a pittance of a sort and where the candidates for the dictatorship enrolled bands of partisans and the sale of votes carried with it material advantages, even if not great ones. Caesar, when he gave orders that one-third of the men employed in guarding the flocks of the State should be of free condition, took a very mild measure which could have no far-reaching consequences and one which in all probability was completely disregarded by the large landowners.

Thus the numbers of the town proletariat grew by the mere force of things and beyond the possibility of redress by adequate legislation. If, in the capital of the world, the members of the *plebs* were able to find certain precarious resources, thanks to the food dole, they were nevertheless reduced elsewhere, as in the industrial and commercial centres which had formed from the Po to the land of the Samnites, to a state of unemployment which was both of too frequent occurrence and too widespread.

True, it would be an exaggeration to maintain that the free artisan class was excluded from production. On the contrary, so long as wants were growing and domestic labour was tending to split up into independent branches of industry, this class found new sources of activity to exploit, in which it did not necessarily meet with servile competition. But its numbers grew much faster than the opportunities of employment. The problem of free labour in Roman antiquity cannot be dismissed by quoting a few

chosen words from Cicero or citing the repartees of Plautus, as showing the disdain in which manufacturing activities were held. It is undoubtedly true that these activities, even at the end of the Republic, were far from enjoying popular esteem and were regarded as the appanage of the lower classes. Nevertheless this conception, strange as it may appear to men of the twentieth century, was itself a result of the economic system. It was not because manual labour and also certain non-manual tasks were considered degrading that they were given to slaves, but they were despised because they were regarded as attributes of slavery: if they continued to be for the greater part reserved for the human cattle the reason is that the slave system had become so strongly established that the unorganized proletariat could fight but feebly against it. It is, at first sight, even a matter for surprise that the free workers continued to exist and even maintained their place in the general economic system. At Rome the *annona* rendered them the greatest service, but elsewhere they were plunged into terrible misery and reduced to begging from the rich.

If proof be sought that free labour existed and did not leave to slave labour the whole of the economic activities of the towns—and even of the countryside—it may be found in the fact that the contract of hire assumed a form peculiar to itself among other forms of contract and that its terms were fixed by law. In works of construction a distinction was made between labour contracts and building contracts, each being drawn up without solemn formalities, but partaking of the nature of a mutual undertaking based upon good faith.

As to the wages paid to workmen, we have no definite information in respect of the second and first centuries. Cicero considers that the day's pay of a piece-worker was a sum corresponding to $6\frac{1}{4}$d. This is about the same as the pre-War wage of our own day if we take into account the low price of corn, oil, salt and meat. Although higher than in the north of Italy—where, it would appear, hotel-keepers took in guests for $\frac{1}{2}$d. per day inclusive of food—the cost of living in the capital was far from being as high as in our time, or even in the latter centuries of the Roman Empire.

As in the first period, the artisans were organized in colleges. We have seen that the oldest of these groups goes back to the time of Numa. It is evident that between the Punic Wars and the beginning of the Civil Wars, their number increased, but the increase was slow. The various vocations were too little differentiated and the division of labour was in too rudimentary a stage to permit of much diversity between these guilds. The ring-makers, goldsmiths and silversmiths, wreath-makers and masons were the most important and active of them. Fullers, potters, butchers, rope-makers, stone-hewers and flute-players either carried on the tradition of the early colleges or set up new ones. Rome had no monopoly of this system, for almost everywhere the artisans realized the necessity of union in order to obtain a greater measure of protection against the servile invasion. The butchers, cattle dealers and cooks organized themselves at Praeneste and the fullers at Spoletium.

These bodies, traces of which have been found, followed very different aims. Certain of them were solely concerned with religion, proffering mutual assistance, and affording suitable funeral arrangements. The protecting deities were invoked in common by members in the course of ceremonies which took place at regular intervals. When a member died a fixed sum was paid to the widow or a statutory contribution was made towards the expenses of his burial—or the deceased was interred in the burial place reserved for the association. Other colleges organized recreations and others joined as a body in the electoral campaigns and sold *en bloc* the votes of their members to the highest bidder. Those with which we are concerned here, the vocational colleges, recruited their members from all categories of the free proletariat. They included unskilled workers, art-workers, shop-keepers, business agents and brokers—even the staff of the magistracy. Freedmen were also admitted on the same footing as the plebeians.

According to Waltzing, an authority in the matter, the guilds were immune from any form of external regulation and from any official interference throughout the greater part of the Republic. They were not authorized by the law but it did not forbid them—with the result that they benefited by a *de facto* situation and, so long as they abstained

from holding clandestine meetings which might arouse the susceptibilities and the fear of those in power, they had full licence to recruit members, to keep a common purse, and to hold meetings. Thus for centuries no administrative interference disturbed their activities.

The Senate, however, showed itself mistrustful when the Civil Wars had begun to bring bloodshed into Rome and the chiefs of the armies sought adherents among the *plebs* of the metropolis. It profited by the conspiracy of Catilina, in which certain groups of artisans were involved, to suppress the majority of the colleges. A small minority, consisting of those which were not classed as dangerous to the security of the State, was allowed to remain. Six years later (58), the tribune Clodius, whose policy it was to flatter the mob, restored the old liberties and persuaded Cicero himself to agree to this measure. Shortly afterwards, however, Caesar, by the Julian Law, abolished all vocational associations, except those which dated from Numa. He thus dealt a heavy blow to the free artisan class, which was already experiencing great difficulty in maintaining itself in existence.

CHAPTER IX

ROME AS A CAPITAL

IT is impossible to understand the economy of the Roman world and the direction and magnitude of the trade currents which met there, unless we first of all take into account the extent to which the capital drew to itself both men and wares. It has been said very truly that the history of Rome is that of the domination of one town over an enormous portion of the world. This domination was not purely political and the town did not stop at imposing her own laws upon the most diverse peoples but she obliged them to work for her—not only by taking thousands of men but also by concentrating within her walls, for the needs and pleasures of her plutocracy, the foodstuffs for which she ransacked the four corners of the earth. She was the link between east and west, between Gaul and Spain on the one hand and the Hellenic countries on the other, and again between Africa and the Danubian countries. After having conquered Carthage and pillaged Rhodes she formed the concentration point for the precious wares and the heavy materials of which she kept a considerable portion for herself and sent the remainder to the towns which had grown up in the Italian peninsula and were increasing in size, as the second century passed into the first. As we shall see, this transit trade was relatively unimportant. Nevertheless, imports were considerable for that epoch.

Rome was never a large industrial city, but she was one of the great trade centres—probably the most important of antiquity. She received from abroad—by which I mean from outside Italy—not only furs, perfumes, pearls, and purple but the very subsistence of her inhabitants, the grain which Sicily first, then Africa, and finally Egypt sent at intervals and the delay or non-arrival of which might provoke terrible famines. Her demands acted to a certain extent as a regulator of manufacturing and also of

agricultural production in the Mediterranean basin. The activities of the whole of the peoples who had been subjected, annexed or placed under protection were subordinated to the affluence of the Roman population and to the increase of their luxuries, and this subordination was so strict that the activities in question would have been stifled had the metropolis been suddenly visited by a calamity such as an epidemic, a fire, or an invasion. It should be repeated here that no single capital of modern time plays a part in the territory of which it is the centre comparable with that which Rome had assumed at the end of the Republic and which she retained until the creation of Constantinople. Not one possesses so exclusive a directive power over the lives of millions of men.

Rome owed this exceptional prestige in the first place to her very numbers. It is certain that in assessing at 500,000 her population in the first century we should err on the side of under-estimation. But if account be taken of the small density of population in the central region of Italy at that period it will be understood how so vast an agglomeration affected the imagination and also brought into being a flow of economic currents from all sides and of remarkable regularity. We are moreover tempted to add considerably to the number of inhabitants assigned to the city by many historians, when we remember that under the censorship of Cato the Elder, that is to say at the beginning of the second century, the office of the *annona* was concerned in finding subsistence at a low cost for 200,000 persons and that at the time of Clodius, in 58, 320,000 paupers received a free dole of corn. If at that time 320,000 persons enjoyed the right to benefit by the largesse of the State by reason of their indigent condition, the whole population—including slaves whose number is usually given as 200,000—was evidently more than half a million. Apart from the persons domiciled in the metropolis we should include those who lived in its neighbourhood and were intimately bound up with its economic life; thus, long before Actium, Rome represented a gigantic market for produce of all kinds.

The capital was essentially benefited by the rural exodus which, clearly apparent after the defeat of Carthage, continued

in the time of the Gracchi and again became accentuated in the first century. Besides ruined peasants who came to the capital in search of food and work, immigration from abroad furnished a continual stream of new arrivals, especially after Greece was transformed into a province. The Greeks and Asiatics who disembarked after a few days' voyage filled all the posts connected with commerce and also entered the liberal professions, in which it was reasonably easy to gain a good livelihood. As rhetoricians, grammarians, advocates and comedians, the newcomers soon formed a relatively important group. Rome, as certain writers of the time have pointed out, had lost her original character and there, as at Alexandria, all races were to be found rubbing shoulders and competing for the profits to be made in trade, for the favours of the great families and for the munificence of the public treasury. While the poor flocked to Rome in order to obtain food at the expense of the dole administration, the rich installed themselves in the capital in order to enjoy the advantages to be found in a large centre of population, to exhibit their luxury and to acquire that direct influence in public affairs which facilitated the increase of their fortunes. Between the first Punic War and the wars against Mithridates, the transformation was noticeable: from the defeat of the "Hannibal of Pontus" to the fall of Antony, it was far more significant and more profound.

Rome, although she had become a great city, was unable to increase her building area. It is on record that when the famous fire of Nero broke out in 64 the houses were in such juxtaposition and the streets so narrow that destruction was complete. The general aspect of the town was doubtless not different at the time of Caesar and of Pompey. An enormous population was huddled into narrow confines, hardly broken by the forum, the market, and the public buildings. It was all the denser in most districts in that the suburbs, owing to the difficulty of communications, were of but small extent. From the third century, when Hannibal was terrorizing Italy, houses of three storeys were numerous and the historians relate that their rent was high. One hundred and fifty years later, buildings of seven storeys were not rare; speculation in town property was general, and we learn from Aulus Gellius that the best form of invest-

ment was the purchase of property, which was then divided into very small and very expensive apartments for artisans. The latter, however seductive life in the capital may have been for them in other respects, found accommodation with difficulty and for the most part lived in atrocious slums.

By the side of the narrow, high, and more or less sordid houses of the populous quarters those built for the rich were very comfortable and were ornamented inside and out. Clodius, Crassus, Lucullus, and their like—even Cicero himself—built for themselves mansions, or rather palaces. They did not enjoy all the conveniences which science offers to the millionaires and multimillionaires of to-day, but they had a staff of stokers and another of bath attendants ; in short, the most fastidious could satisfy their tastes. Little by little the aspect of the city became more beautiful. Though it had not acquired in the first century B.C. the splendour which characterized it a hundred years later, public monuments were multiplying and the victorious generals made every effort and spared no expense to imprint upon it some sign of their generosity and their fame.

The censors supervised the construction of the walls, the paving of the streets, the provision of water supplies, and the upkeep of the sewers : the temples, the fora and the theatres were also subject to their administration. The first stone theatre was built by Pompey, and Caesar in his turn erected the great circus which held 150,000 spectators. The general aim was, however, to endow Rome with buildings of utility which should serve her commercial interests and stimulate her general activities.

As early as the year 184, Cato opened the Basilica Porcia, a gigantic bazaar. Soon afterwards, in 175, the market or *macellum* was destroyed by fire and was rebuilt on a larger scale. For a long time, the forum was obstructed by booths, as was the Via Sacra, the roads which led thither being reserved for various kinds of traders—there was a Corn-street, a Curriers-street, a Glassblowers-street and a Scentmakers-street. When the Basilica Sempronia was finished, the magistrates endeavoured to clear the forum. This was but partially achieved, and with difficulty, for the bankers and goldsmiths took up practically all the pitches from which the other traders had been driven. The whole of this part

of Rome was always full of busy crowds which in certain passages were dense almost to the point of suffocation. The hour was shown either by sundials, of which the first dated from 268 B.C., or by waterclocks, which were first introduced in 159 and passed into general use : they consisted of a glass vase into which a steady jet of water flowed. The height of the water in the vase, which was graduated on the outside, indicated the time.

In order that the public might not be delayed in proceeding to their daily tasks, steps were taken to reduce obstruction in the streets. The Lex Julia Municipalis, passed in the year 45 B.C., stipulated that waggons should only use the roads in the evening and night hours, commercial traffic being forbidden from dawn to the sixth hour.

The strength of the economic attraction exercised by Rome even at the end of the Republic is, however, best seen in the traces which are left of the port. This emporium had been established in 193 by the aediles, M. Aemilius Pepidus and L. Aemilius Paulus, to receive the grain and materials which arrived at the mouth of the Tiber and were stored in vast magazines. Stone quays by the side of the river held it within its channel and afforded space for the sheds in which the goods were handled.

Although the industry of the capital remained rudimentary and was restricted to the lesser crafts, the trade done in articles of luxury and in slaves increased in Rome from year to year. She came to equal the once renowned and splendid Capua and to be worthy of the gigantic rôle which she had elected to play—a fit capital of the vast empire which she had gathered about her and whose myriad influences she now began to feel.

CHAPTER X

THE FOOD SUPPLY

THE problem of feeding the people close-crowded at the foot of the Capitol was at all times one of the gravest with which the magistrates were faced. The maintenance of public order was intimately connected with the management of food supplies. So long as this mob had regular supplies of corn at a low price—even gratis—the aristocracy knew that they had in their hands a serious guarantee against the possibility of revolt, but if corn were lacking sedition might sweep away the whole of established order. The food question was one that called for attention from the earliest times, when Rome was but a small town surrounded by the fields of Latium; it became all-important when Rome was the centre of the civilized world and attracted within her gates the peasants of Italy, the unemployed and the ambitious of the whole of the Mediterranean—and when the cultivation of cereals was abandoned in the Peninsula.

But this decline of primitive agriculture was itself the result of the methods which the senators adopted in order to furnish the *plebs* with the essential foodstuffs. Fearing famines or increases in the cost of living, which might have led to dangerous disturbances, they made every effort to wrest from the annexed provinces the maximum tribute in kind. They also organized imports and a system of sale or free distribution by the State. This system, which nearly resulted in killing free trade in grain, at the same time ruined production in the greater part of Italy. The fixing of prices by the officials of the *annona* in the town itself on a scale considerably below the real values, the gifts made by the treasury and the admission of citizens by the hundred thousand as beneficiaries of these gifts—all these factors contributed to reduce prices, to discourage agriculture in the Peninsula and to bring about a general transformation which we shall consider later. Foreign competition and the influx of corn from the conquered countries crushed the

peasants of Latium, of Etruria and of Campania, who lost the Roman market and either ceded their fields to wealthier purchasers or waited to be expropriated when their debts became too heavy. The result in both cases was deplorable. Thus the *annona* system helped to develop the *latifundia* and the triumph of the *latifundia*, by the reduction of the area of cornfields, forced the Senate to be even more concerned with the problem of obtaining food supplies.

The countries of central Italy, which had even at first produced but little, shewed a continually decreasing yield of cereals and were no longer in a position to meet a possible deficit: the question of the freedom of the seas became of first importance, together with the problem of keeping peace in the provinces from which a corn tribute was demanded. It will be readily understood that at certain times the ruling class in Rome attached as much importance to assuring its communications and food supplies as to crushing a king who menaced the frontiers. A distinction must be drawn between the special powers which were conferred upon Caius Gracchus and those with which Pompey and Caesar were invested. Caius Gracchus wished above all to pursue his political and social policy for the benefit of the middle class, as opposed to the patricians, by reorganizing the *annona* and giving it exceptional powers. But he was very far from possessing the tremendous power which was given to Pompey in 67 B.C. and which, although it served the interests of the army commander, was intended to restore tranquillity to the *plebs* and the plutocracy by crushing the pirates. There had grown up in the eastern Mediterranean a kind of vast brotherhood of corsairs who devastated the coasts and carried off convoys. They attacked for preference the ships—always awaited with anxiety—which brought the Egyptian harvests to Rome. The Lex Gabinia gave to Pompey, together with the command of the sea and of the coasts, 125,000 men, 25 legates and 500 ships. By the use of these forces, the general freed the commercial routes and in a few weeks again assured Rome of the regular arrival of her imports.

Thirty years later fate willed it that the son of the conqueror of the pirates, Sextus Pompeius, who fought against Octavius, should constitute a fleet in his turn and capture

grain-ships with the object of blockading Rome. The populace was in such fear of famine that it at first constrained Octavius to treat with the dreaded seaman, but it was not long before Octavius and Lepidus broke with that ruler of the Mediterranean. He then resumed the struggle and on several occasions there was danger of a dearth of corn in the capital. At last, in the year 36, the disaster which Sextus Pompeius sustained at Naulochus restored the security of the *annona* which for some years had been administered by the aediles of the corn supply (*Aediles cereales*).

The corn consumed in Rome came for the most part from Sicily, but Africa, Egypt, Spain and Sardinia also contributed a share.

Sicily, since her annexation in the third century, was obliged to furnish contributions in kind, to which we have already referred.

The Republican statesmen regarded Sicily as the most valuable possession and the most precious province. "She is the magazine of the Republic and the nurse of Rome," said Cato, whilst Cicero in the Verrine orations rendered her homage in the following terms: "She has been of inestimable value to us. Everything which her soil could produce seemed to be reserved in advance for our consumption rather than grown for her own inhabitants. When has she failed to deliver on the day when it was due the corn which she owed us?" This tithe of grain—in part purchased and in part "assessed"—which was dispatched by the Sicilians, represented a considerable quantity, but we do not know the exact total. We only know that, under Sulla, they provided the city in the form of tithe properly so called, that is to say gratuitously, with 600,000 *medimni* or a little more than 300,000 hectolitres (825,000 bushels). This amount was doubled in 73 and the province was forbidden to export to any other destination than Italy. Like Carthage and Asia, Sardinia had to contribute one-tenth of her corn; Spain one-twentieth of her grain—and also, according to Livy and Cicero, one-tenth of her oils and wines. As for Egypt, whose assistance became necessary in the first century, she appeared so rich that the imperialists and Pompey himself soon called out for her conquest. That the enter-

prise was postponed was due to considerations of State which the Senate was obliged to impose upon the masses of the people. Later, the Egyptian tribute—the corn of the Delta demanded as a tax and no longer paid for—ensured to the officials of the *annona* a very important supplementary supply.

All the cargoes of cereals which the provinces sent to Rome arrived in the first instance at Puteoli and were thence dispatched to Ostia and brought up the Tiber by *caudicarii*. They were finally delivered to the aediles, whose heavy and complex duties included not only the supply of food but also its distribution.

The fact is well known that from a very early date this distribution was carried out below the current price, that is, the price paid for such corn as was not obtained as tribute. In the third century, the prices fixed by the officials fluctuated greatly. In the year 203, wheat was supplied at four asses the *modius*, that is to say at 8d. per bushel. In 201, a reduction of ½d. per bushel was granted and in 200, the *modius* cost only two asses or a bushel 4d.

When Caius Gracchus undertook his great corn reform he was content, as in the case of his agrarian laws, to abide by a very old tradition. His plan was not to reduce prices still further—on the contrary he raised them on the whole—but to give every needy citizen a definite right to five bushels a month, the five bushels being sold at half the normal price. The treasury was thereby enormously burdened, for the State was now bound by a strict obligation, whereas it had previously distributed corn as a pure act of grace. In the year 100 the cost of a *modius*, which had until then been six and one-third asses, was reduced to five-sixths of an as by the Lex Apuleia.

In the year 62, according to Plutarch, twenty million bushels were distributed among the people in this manner. A second phase in the history of the corn supply opened, however, when Clodius was tribune, in 58. Free distributions suddenly succeeded sales below cost price and, instead of the 200,000 citizens who benefited by the regulations of Caius Gracchus, 320,000 were now placed on the lists. From £240,000 under Cato, the expenses of the food dole rose to £880,000 or £920,000 per annum ; they fell to £760,000

when Caesar made large cuts in the numbers receiving free food by stipulating that persons laying claim thereto must be in possession of civic rights, prove their indigence and be domiciled in Rome. He laid down 200,000 as the maximum number allowed on the lists which, he stipulated, should be revised yearly. But Caesar himself, apart from the regular service of the *annona*, thought it well in the interests of his personal popularity to order special distributions of corn and even of other foods. Moreover, after 79, an aedile had sold oil, either in order to please the populace, or to convert into currency the tribute which Spain and other provinces furnished in kind.

It will be understood that all these steps taken on the initiative of the magistrates and dictated by political considerations reacted more or less rapidly on the economic situation even of regions which bordered upon the capital and in the first place had supplied it with food.

CHAPTER XI

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

THE development of agriculture was very characteristic of the period from the third to the first century and the reasons are clearly seen in the considerations which we have already reviewed. The very expansion of her conquests, by giving to Rome along the whole periphery of empire fertile fields and inexhaustible granaries, brought about in Italy a change in agricultural methods. The tributes in kind which the newly-annexed provinces were called upon to furnish, and which consisted mainly of corn, brought about a practically continuous reduction in the price of grain. When Sicilian wheat was sold by order of the aediles at much reduced prices in the Roman market, the latter was automatically closed to imports from Campania and Etruria, and the peasants of those countries, crushed by the insupportable competition, preferred to discontinue the sowings which had been traditional in the first centuries. Thereupon, the culture of the vine, the production of oil, and horticulture spread over a large area. In the same phase, and through contact with Hellenic and Asiatic civilizations, the simple food requirements of the first ages made way for the development of table luxuries. Senators and *equites* rivalled one another in sumptuousness, and costly vegetables, fruit brought from Asia, poultry, small birds and fish raised at great expense were served for the first time. Whilst the production of cereals was decreasing under the influence of events, or by reason of the circumstances attending conquest, other forms of production grew up in response to the increased facilities for making profit, and thus became established in the whole of the region bordering on the capital. Nor did the influx of the servile population fail to accentuate this movement, for the rich were able in their villas to employ in raising birds, growing oysters and breeding fish—in short, in all the multiple activities to which they devoted themselves and which were far more remunerative than sowing

and harvesting wheat—the labour of the captives whom they bought on their return from the wars. The large staffs which these new enterprises required—the scale was one unknown to the early Romans—were recruited without difficulty in the slave markets held in the large centres of Europe and Asia.

But at the same time as the methods of agriculture were undergoing transformation the same process was taking place in respect of property. Not only did the imports of Sicilian, African and Egyptian wheat ruin, in Italy, the production of cereals but they did enormous damage to the small farmers who had not the necessary capital to lay out vineyards or olive plantations or equip aviaries. The Civil Wars led to the desertion of the countryside, which the victorious veterans covered with ruins, and usury finished the task of wiping out of existence the peasant farmers, who endeavoured to resist their fate until the last hour. The first century saw the triumph of the *latifundium* which, if it did not invade the whole of the Peninsula, at least took root in certain regions whence it spread throughout the known world.

There is an evident link between the two phases of development, which will be considered here in somewhat more detail. It is because the growing of corn gave place to horticultural, bird-raising, oil-producing and pastoral occupations that the great estates developed to the detriment of the others and it is because these great estates obtained an ever-increasing influence that the whole of the economic system of the Servian epoch was overthrown at the time of the Gracchi. Furthermore, the changes which we shall note did not arise suddenly or unexpectedly; their advent had been foreshadowed a long time in advance by unmistakable signs, the first indications of which we have already discerned in the period of history which immediately preceded the Punic Wars.

Agriculture had not forfeited, in the second period of Roman history, the predominant part which it played in the first; in the eyes of the senatorial aristocracy as of the financial aristocracy it preserved in the first century before our era the pre-eminent prestige which it had acquired from the earliest time, and which was to be explained by economic

circumstances. The desire and ambition of all who made their fortunes in overseas trade or appropriated the spoils of kings and nations in warfare was firstly to possess an estate in central Italy and then to increase and develop it. Even when industry, trade and finance had made considerable progress, the politicians of Rome endeavoured to maintain society on an agricultural basis. And if the works of the agronomists Cato and Varro have been so much read and commented upon, it is because landed wealth always appeared to be the noblest form of wealth—that which brought to its possessors, together with an assured position, both consideration and social influence.

Highly though agriculture was esteemed, it made but slow progress, and although little by little additions were certainly made to the degree of skill exercised, and better instruments for its practice were acquired, it neverthless at no time attained any marked extent of technical development. Cato the Elder—if we disregard the incurable rapacity of which his works give proof and which eliminated certain of the most essential forms of expenditure—offers excellent advice, and Varro, who lived a hundred and fifty years later and had the advantage of access to numerous written works and acquaintance with a science which had considerably developed, is full of useful counsel. Neither of them seems, however, to have succeeded in shaking the routine which evolved from the primordial cultivation of cereals: they were, moreover, all the less likely to do so in that this form of agriculture was already in a state of decline owing to the external reasons which we have outlined.

Between Cato and Varro there are many differences. By comparing the work of the two authors one can readily see the development which had taken place between the Macedonian war and the final conquest of the Mediterranean basin. It never occurred to Varro to discuss the famous order of value which his predecessor had established and which in itself formed an eloquent illustration of the changes of which we have spoken. This order was: vineyards, gardens, osier beds, olive plantations, meadows, and, sixth only, cornfields—to which alone the old Romans were attached—and finally copses, orchards and oak groves. But Varro did not proclaim with the same obstinacy: "The

farmer worthy of the name should buy nothing or as little as possible ". He insisted, still more than Cato, upon recourse being had to labourers of free condition ; he shewed that a good owner should encourage his slaves to marry instead of making it impossible by unjustifiable pecuniary conditions ; he studied the methods of the peoples whom Rome had annexed or who were her neighbours, and in particular he cited the use by the Gauls north of the Po of marl for improvng the soil. One feels that he was well-informed and that he understood all the details of the agricultural transformation which had taken place in his time. In reality, the estates which at the time of Cato were regarded as large were only considered to be of medium extent in that of Varro and the inherent faults of the Italian agrarian system—for it is principally of Italy that we speak here—came to light with increased clearness.

The agricultural methods of Rome were certainly inferior to those of Greece and Egypt and probably to those of Gaul. Upon this point the historians and the agronomists are in complete agreement. Part of the Peninsula was not available for cultivation in any form because large areas were occupied by marshes, both in the north and in the centre. In 115, Scaurus undertook certain reclamation work in the region of the Po and partial enterprises of the same kind were carried out in the Pontine Marshes and the Maremma. Nowhere, however, was work carried out on a large scale to remove the stagnant water from the plains. Cicero tells us that marshes remained numerous in the neighbourhood of Rome. The result was that large districts were empty of rural population and that production in general was uncertain. The Civil Wars of the first century helped to perpetuate this inaction on the part of the officials and private individuals. Further, the continual extension of the slave system was not favourable to the introduction of new methods or to the adaptation of those which the agronomists might recommend, for the servile system, by its very nature, tended to foster inflexible routine in all categories of economic activity. The rotation of crops was always deficient, manures were not unknown but it was not considered worth while to go to the expense of procuring them. Although the order of work which Cato

and Varro have described for us merits approval, there is no evidence that it was generally observed, even on the large estates—where absenteeism led to a lack of zeal and order. Although certain parts of the vegetable-growing districts which formed in the neighbourhood of the capital appear to have received appropriate irrigation, it must not be forgotten that this district was a restricted one and that the performance of such work would point to the existence of relatively large sums of capital. Finally the system of renting and *métayage* has been criticized, not without reason, by the experts, for the lessee received so small a proportion of the yield (one-fifth at most but more often one-seventh or one-ninth) that he was not encouraged to work hard.

The implements of husbandry were few and real machinery was non-existent. The farmers were content, or practically so, to exploit the natural fertility of the soil, and hardly dreamt of having recourse to complicated devices—for which in any case the rudimentary science of the day would have been unable to find a use. The Archimedian screw, which made its appearance in Egypt in the third century B.C., only penetrated into Italy at a much later date. Corn was thrashed on an open floor with a harrow or a table into which teeth had been set. Hampers, baskets and rakes were in general made on the premises, as were scythes, which were for a long time made of bronze, though iron was used subsequently. They were not even sharpened by means of stone in the first centuries of this period. The form of cart generally used was drawn by two oxen or cows. In spite of the customs of the old form of agriculture, farmers began to buy from outside sources certain indispensable implements for work in the fields. Cato gives certain data in this connexion. He recommends the farmers to buy their scythes and harrows at Minturnae, their spades at Venafrum, their buckets at Capua, carts in Lucania, sledges in Alba, nails at Nola and clogs, barrels and yokes in Rome. It will thus be seen that even at this early date the farmer was no longer self-contained but was dependant on the various industries which had been set up in one part or another. In general, he had at his disposal indifferent forces of production and only limited material resources equally incapable of coping with an advanced degree of development.

It is because these conditions were unfavourable that agriculture remained essentially extensive and that the rustic slave "families", numerically maintained without difficulty on account of the wars, attained the large dimensions to which I have already alluded. Cato tells us that to maintain 240 acres of olives the services were required of a manager, an overseer, five hands, three drovers, a swineherd, an ass-driver and a shepherd. For 100 acres of vines he considered it necessary to employ a manager, a woman overseer, an ass-driver, a man to look after the osier bed, a drover, a shepherd and ten hands—i.e. 13 and 16 persons respectively.

When we come to study the agricultural methods of the Italians and the unsatisfactory nature of the means at their disposal, we are not surprised to find that, in spite of certain evident dangers, they made use of slaves by the hundred thousand. Their technical equipment and knowledge were too rudimentary to enable them to fertilize the soil and at the same time to derive from it a maximum yield: they could not exist within the narrow confines which, if properly exploited, would have been rich enough to-day to feed a relatively dense rural population. Obliged, therefore, in order to live, to increase the area of their holdings continually, they were forced to rely upon an ever-increasing staff. We touch here upon the vital reasons for the agricultural inferiority of the peoples of Latium, Etruria, Campania, Lucania and elsewhere.

We have seen that corn came only sixth on the list drawn up by Cato. The reason was that, towards the year 190 B.C., it no longer offered a certain and profitable yield. Italy was the first country to restrict sowings, but in the first century other countries which had a heavy fiscal burden to bear followed her example. Campania and Etruria were the last countries of the Peninsula to attempt to harvest on a large scale wheat, spelt, barley and millet; and Varro testified to the good results which they obtained. It must, however, be observed that the grain imports, which were concentrated in Rome and constituted her food supply, can hardly have been used to feed the country districts. The latter could no longer rival the tributary provinces of Sicily, Sardinia and Africa: they had, however, to consider their own food requirements and it is this fundamental

necessity which explains the continued cultivation of cereals in the districts which in effect were debarred from exportation by the force of circumstances.

It has been calculated that, towards the year 70 B.C., half of the Italian population relied upon foreign wheat. Sicily furnished—account being taken of the amounts due for tithe and of those which remained available for sale in the normal way—about four million hectolitres (11,000,000 bushels), Sardinia 2,000,000, Africa 1,500,000, and Egypt 750,000 hectolitres. The total amounted to more than 8,000,000 hectolitres (22,000,000 bushels), so that if 2,000,000 Italians were fed by imported corn, they would have received four hectolitres (eleven bushels) each. This figure is, however, evidently too high, for France of to-day with 39,000,000 inhabitants only consumes 125,000,000 hectolitres. We must therefore conclude either that the imports of grain did not attain the amounts given above or that the number of Italians supplied with corn from the provinces was considerably in excess of 2,000,000.

The yield of the Peninsula itself was extremely irregular and according to Varro it varied, according to the district, the situation of the fields and the treatment of the soil, between sixfold and fifteenfold. It would be an impossible task to attempt to strike an average from the scanty and unconfirmed information which we possess. As to prices we have already seen that they fell continuously under the influence of the decisions taken by the government with a view to lowering prices in the interest of social peace. Though the hectolitre fell at times below 1s. 8d., it rose to more than 19s. 2d. in the third century when Hannibal devastated central Italy; and this price was then regarded as three times the normal. On the other hand, at the time of Polybius, towards 170, when prices as a whole were low, the hectolitre cost about 1s. 4d. This was twice the cost of barley and we may the better measure the decrease in prices which the influx of foreign foodstuffs had brought about and institute a useful comparison by pointing out that three litres of wine (five pints) cost about ½d.

Whilst the cultivation of cereals was decreasing and was considered as ruinous or at least as yielding but a small return, the culture of the vine and the production of oil

covered ever wider areas. These could triumph the more easily and supplant the growing of wheat and spelt all the better in that capital and slave labour were not lacking as they had been in the early centuries. They spread from the valley of the Arno as far as Tarentum, but they also acclimatized themselves in other districts. Varro praises the oil of Venafrum and we know that it was first exported at the time of the wars of the pirates.

Of the wines, the most highly considered were Caecuban, Falernian, Vesuvian and Sorrentian. Certain writers assess at 18 per cent. the average profit to be derived from this trade, but it is certain that the cultivation of the vine in the Peninsula had to meet from an early date the competition of the wines of Greece, Asia and Spain, which the customs duties did not adequately keep out. A crisis of trade stagnation is the reason for the injunction addressed to the inhabitants of Narbonensis not to plant vines and the stagnation in its turn is to be imputed to the small consumption, the greater part of the population drinking but little wine and the women none at all. The year 121 is given as that of the first appearance of cellars and it is permissible to deduce from this innovation that the culture of the vine was very flourishing at that date.

Horticulture and market-gardening found suitable sites in the near neighbourhood of Rome where their products had a regular sale. Varro tells us that vegetables, fruit and flowers, in the first century, arrived in large consignments from Latium, from Campania and even from the valley of the Po. Lentils, broad beans, peas, kidney beans, garlic, endives, cabbages and radishes were in common use. Asparagus, which came from Ravenna, and artichokes were reserved for the rich, who disdained cabbage, so dear to Cato the elder, and also broad beans, both of which were regarded as coarse food. Market-gardening production required capital, as did the upkeep of the gardens and the orchards. Roses and violets were cultivated in several districts of central Italy, in the valley of Reate, along Lake Fucinus (Lago di Celano), chiefly in the neighbourhood of Nursia. The apples and pears of Verona were famous. The Asiatic campaigns had the unexpected result of acquainting the Romans with new fruits : the apricot which became acclimatized in the

Sabine country, the nut which was common in Persia, the peach, which, as its name indicates, also came from Persia, the African pomegranate (the Punic apple), the quince, which was much appreciated in Spain and the cherry which Lucullus brought back from Pontus: for the patricians the exotic origins of these fruits doubled their value and enhanced their taste.

It was, however, chiefly to raising rare birds that the rich turned in order to increase the revenue of their properties. Large villas—the word meant a farm—were set up from the second century at the gates of the metropolis, so that its needs might be met rapidly: later, they spread as far as the neighbourhood of Tarentum and of Naples, but Ostia and the locality which is now known as Albano remained the centres of this production. Many of these villas produced £4,000 in revenue, and more, and the fact is not surprising when one reflects upon the extraordinary table luxury which prevailed at the time of the Civil Wars. The actor, Aesopus, whose fortune was not excessive, offered banquets at which the guests ate £1,000 worth of song-birds. A land-owner is mentioned who could alone furnish 50,000 thrushes in one day. Aufidius Lurco, who derived £600 from the sale of peacocks was, according to Varro, but a poor bird-breeder by the side of others whose income from their trade was £12,000 or £16,000 at least, if certain writers are to be believed.

The fishponds and oyster-beds of Baiae, of Brindisi, and of Lake Lucrinus were also so many flourishing industries which were much more highly esteemed even than the keeping of flocks and herds, for they were to a certain extent the monopoly of the opulent class.

Italy had much land suitable for cattle-raising and towards the end of the Republic this occupation increased all the more as the habit of eating meat became much more common. The mountains of Apulia, of Samnium and of Etruria held excellent pasture-land. If the smaller flocks disappeared little by little as smallholdings themselves disappeared, the large flocks and herds prospered on estates the area of which often exceeded 500 acres. Sheep, whose wool was highly prized, lived by the thousand in the central and southern Apennines. Certain cross-strains and certain carefully operated selections

improved the various breeds of animal, especially asses, some specimens of which—doubtless exceptional—were sold for as much as £1,000 and even £4,480 of our money.

The making of cheese, stimulated by the extension of the stocks of cows and sheep, spread from the Etrurian coast to the mountains of the Sabine country, the enormous wheels of Luna and the Vestine cheese of Latium being especially appreciated.

Thus, all forms of agricultural life were represented, but the primordial one—the production of cereals—had lost ground to the advantage of the others. The more wine and oil were produced, and bird-raising and dairy-farming were practised, the greater was the setback to the growing of corn, spelt, and oats. The *latifundia* had contributed to precipitate this revolution, from which they had issued and we have already pointed out this interplay of action and reaction.

Long before the time of Pliny, who was to deplore its continued progress, the system of *latifundia*, i.e. of large estates which were not exploited directly by the owner—a system which postulated the attrition of the rural middle class and in fact brought about its complete disappearance—had taken root in the Italian peninsula and in the islands of Sicily and Sardinia. Far from stopping this movement, which the Licinian and may other laws had endeavoured to impede, all the political and economic factors contributed to accentuate it, indeed to make it irresistible. These factors we know: the peasant was deserting his fields—was selling them or allowing them to be taken—because he was obliged to serve with the legions. He was exposed to usurious conditions if he attempted to raise money; he had to face the crushing competition of the tithe corn, and he ran the risk of being dispossessed by armed bands or in favour of the victorious veterans. In the words of Sallust who wrote in the first century B.C., whereas Pliny lived in the first century of our era, "conquest has enriched the wealthy and impoverished the poor." These words are profoundly true, even if we restrict their significance by applying them to agricultural property alone. Conquest multiplied the number of tributary countries, hence the abundance of taxes in kind and hence the imports of corn, of which the State

disposed at a low price or gratuitously. Conquest forced the poor to give up their holdings, in exchange for an insignificant payment, to the rich who invested their capital in them, installed their horticultural or bird-breeding farms and thus assured themselves of huge profits. The *latifundia* were the result of the evolution which we have just described: it was inevitable that they should arise and, having arisen, should steadily grow. Their extension lay as much in the nature of things as that of the industrial system of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Certain modern economists have endeavoured to deny the victory of the *latifundia* or they have sought to diminish their importance; absolutely, by attempting to prove that small holdings continued to exist and to occupy a large area; relatively, by shewing that the assessment of the larger estates should be accompanied by an assessment of the population, so as to establish a basis of comparison, and that, where the population was sparse, the large estates must be on a very large scale indeed to deserve the name. It is true that the small holdings had not completely disappeared, but this remark does not lead to very trenchant conclusions, for the large landowners found it to their interest at the end of the Roman Republic, as is the case to-day, not to throw the whole of the small holders pell-mell into the city mobs, for their assistance might at times be required. Nor would a comparison of the figures of the estates with those of the surrounding population justify the optimistic conclusion which have been drawn by certain contemporary authors and applied to Manitoba and the American Far West. The arable surface of the Italian peninsula was infinitely less developed than that of the countries of the new world which is so readily quoted and everybody is aware that all the historians of antiquity deplored the concentration which took place in the second century and after. If this concentration had not been harmful to the masses it would not have engendered either the social hatred which was fermenting in the non-propertied classes against the governing plutocracy or the anxieties which have been recorded for us in the works of the Gracchi and other famous men of the end of the Republic.

Plutarch considers that, in the second century B.C., the

disappearance of the free peasant class was a permanent menace and it is probable that he was expressing the anxiety which was pervading all quarters. It is the best proof that the *latifundia* were gaining ground without respite. And how indeed could they fail to do so when, apart from forced sales, the illegal partition of the *ager publicus* and the continual enclosure by the rich of State lands—defended in vain by magistrates who were accused of being revolutionary and held to deserve death—were breaking down the last reserve which might have led to the reconstitution of the system of small holdings ?

In point of fact Crassus, who held 25,000 hectares (62,000 acres) had few rivals : but Picenum, Samnium, Lucania and even Latium itself became the prey of the great purchasers or of the great usurpers. It would be perhaps somewhat exaggerated to say that the whole of Sicily, towards the year 70, belonged to 84 persons ; nevertheless 84 owners of *latifundia* held enormous areas there. Africa also fell into the hands of a few opulent *equites* and Asia underwent the same revolution, which drove the peasants into the towns.

If we look at certain localities, the land system of which it is possible, thanks to relatively accurate records, to study somewhat more closely, we can see the root cause of the phenomenon of agrarian concentration. Such is the case of Praeneste and it is the case above all of certain of the Sicilian centres the lamentable story of which Cicero has retraced for us in his Verrine orations. In Leontium in the course of a few years 51 land holders had disappeared out of a total of 83 ; at Mutyca, 101 out of 168 and at Agyrium 170 out of 250 had lost their holdings either because they were reduced to selling or because other unhappy circumstances had brutally expropriated them.

Doubtless, the unfortunate people who were thus cut off from the middle class sometimes remained on their fields as colonists giving a portion of the produce of their land for rent : they received on lease and subject to a very large deduction the ground which they had previously cultivated for themselves. But even this minority was a privileged one. The majority made room for servile labour and disappeared in the city mobs to live a miserable and precarious existence from which nothing succeeded in detaching them—

for all the attempts to do so which were made later, the most famous of which were those of the Gracchi, proved unavailing in face of the density of numbers.

We have already considered the two methods by which, especially in the fourth century, the Roman reformers attempted to remedy the diminution of the middle class with its disadvantages from the point of view of social equilibrium and of recruiting for the legions—agrarian laws and the foundation of colonies. These two methods were again employed in the particularly critical phase with which we are now dealing. Their necessity was felt all the more by those who, through conservatism in the first place and through fear of a constantly increasing proletariat, wished to restore small holdings, in that the brutal triumph of the *latifundia* might well compromise the food supply of the nation. It is true that Sicily and Africa, to quote only these two sources, were sending to Puteoli and Ostia enormous cargoes of corn, but the officials of the *annona* always went in fear of a return of famine and the only guarantee of regular supplies, in the mind of many cautious men, lay in the maintenance of the growers at first hand who had throughout the early ages furnished the supplies of cereals.

It is only when we consider the whole body of arguments which militated in favour of the agrarian laws, that is to say of the restoration and redistribution of the public lands enclosed by the rich, that we see the Gracchi in their true light. They were not revolutionaries but their aim was to restore in part the old regime which had held sway uutil the fifth century. They did not dream of deposing the nobility, but wished only to deprive them of the thousands of acres which they had illegally taken away from the State. They did not meditate any general social levelling; their plan was, by giving the right of individual ownership to the thousands of citizens who could have reconstituted a middle class, to stop the avalanche of great patrician expropriators. To break the intolerable power of the senatorial order, the great majority of whom were hostile to a redistribution of the *ager*, they turned to the *equites*. Everything goes to show that, if they were to have accomplished the task which they had set themselves, it would have been necessary to discard

timidity, exhibit energy and bring forward an audacious programme, but, far from standing out in history as the champions of new doctrines which in any case the Romans of the second century would not have understood, they kept to the paths of tradition and were content to look for their support to the famous Licinian laws, the scope of which we have just seen.

Plutarch justifies in terse phrases the enterprise of Tiberius Gracchus who was tribune in 134 and who made use of his prerogatives to put into force once more the laws which had fallen into disuse for more than two centuries. The passage is worth quoting although it is concerned with facts which have already been analysed here.

> " It was the Roman custom to sell a part of the lands won from their enemies in Italy and to annex the rest to the domain of the Republic. These were leased to such of the citizens as owned no land and for them a small sum was paid into the public coffers. The rich, having raised these rents to a higher rate, had ousted the poor from their possessions. A law was then passed which forbade any citizen to own estates of more than 500 jugera. This law at first restrained the cupidity of the rich and helped the poor, who thus remained upon the lands which they had leased, each keeping the part which had fallen to him when the distribution first took place. But later, the rich neighbours having succeeded in obtaining the award of these farms in their own names, the poor who were thus dispossessed no longer shewed eagerness for military service."

Thus Plutarch approved the initiative taken by Tiberius, which consisted simply in the restoration of the Licinian laws : nobody might own more than 500 *jugera* of the *ager* or send to the public pastures more than 100 cattle or 500 sheep. Everybody was obliged to have on his estates a certain number of workmen of free condition. And the tribune added these two important clauses in attenuation : the tenants of lands of the domain might also keep 250 *jugera* for every son not yet emancipated from the paternal authority and an allowance would be made in compensation for improvements effected on the land taken away from them.

The land recovered was distributed among the poor in inalienable lots and was not subject to rent.

It was when defending in the Forum this memorable and very moderate law that he pronounced the celebrated speech in which occurs the phrase: "The wild beasts of Italy have their dens and their lairs but those who fought for the defence of Italy have no other possession than the light of day and the air which they breathe. They are called the masters of the universe but they do not own a sod of soil." And Plutarch said: "The law of Tiberius was the mildest measure that could have been taken." It was not passed without difficulty and in order to make sure of the vote the tribune was obliged to have his colleague Octavius deposed, in spite of the immunity of members of the Senate. A triumvirate was set up, composed of Tiberius, his brother Caius and his father-in-law Appius Claudius, to put the popular will into execution. Nothing was, however, more difficult than to rediscover the fields of the *ager*, which had been seized centuries before by the nobility and to take them away from citizens who had themselves bought them from the descendants of the usurpers. The aristocracy rose in revolt and formed armed bands: the *plebs* for their part shewed little enthusiasm at the prospect of returning to the fields. Tiberius was assassinated. Scipio Aemilianus, his brother-in-law and head of the senatorial faction, was found dead in his bed four years later (129), a victim, in all probability of the popular faction. In the year 123, Caius Gracchus, who had been made tribune, resumed the work of his brother but on a broader basis. He too was to feel the dogged and bitter resistance of the patriciate which refused to abdicate and which, after having put up L. Drusus to outbid him, set a price on his head. The middle class was definitely condemned to extinction, to the profit of the owners of *latifundia*.

The Lex Thoria in 111 set a seal on the victory of the aristocratic ambitions: it suppressed the *scriptura* or fee paid by owners of flocks for each head of cattle pastured in the *ager*; it abolished all the contributions previously payable by landowners and converted into ownership the *de facto* occupation which was their status until then. A more complete reaction against the policy of the Gracchi can hardly be imagined.

The *ager* of Campania was alone excepted from this legalized seizure. At the time of Cicero, Rullus proposed the Lex Servilia, which was rejected : it provided for the sale of the Campanian *ager* and the purchase, with the proceeds of this operation, of land in the poorer parts of the Peninsula, which were then to be given to the proletariat. A few years later, however, Caesar carried out the main idea of the plan which Rullus had proposed. He did not stop, even to the smallest extent, the concentration, which continued to increase rapidly. The grants of land to the veterans, which succeeded one another from the wars of Marius and Sulla to those of Octavius and Antonius and which were based on expropriations *en masse* in no way helped to restore a system of agriculture on a medium scale, for the soldiers' first concern was to sell the land thus taken by force. When it was said that there were not at Rome 2,000 citizens in enjoyment of a patrimony, that is to say with landed property worthy of the name, an elementary truth was being expressed. Varro's words deserve to remain on record for they express the whole decline of Italian agriculture in the first century : " Now that the fathers of families, abandoning their fields and their ploughs, have nearly all found their way to Rome and are more ready to use their hands clapping at the circus than doing useful work in the vineyard or at the plough, we are obliged to buy our corn from the Sardinians and the Africans and gather grapes in the isles of Cos and Chios." His words might, however, equally well be reversed, for it was because Rome was demanding corn and wine from the provinces that the discouraged small proprietors made way for agrarian capitalism.

The founding of colonies was as incapable of hindering the general development as were the schemes for dividing up the public lands. It is on record that long before the third century Rome had made efforts to transplant groups of citizens to places beyond the frontiers of Latium with a view to keeping watch over the districts which had been but newly conquered and were still restless, and also with the object of giving land to those who had been disinherited. In this second period, military interests gave way before social interests and the Senate was chiefly preoccupied with the problem of removing from the metropolis such of the

plebs as might be tempted in their destitution and in spite of the food dole to join the ranks of the malcontents. It came to pass, however, that these colonies of the second and first centuries, in spite of the precautions which were taken and in spite of the facilities which were conferred upon the emigrants, were a source of bitter disappointment to the governing classes in the capital. As a rule the lands upon which these colonies were established comprised several parts : firstly, a common pasture ; secondly, a tract of land so large that the revenue derived from it sufficed to defray the cost of the public monuments ; thirdly, individual holdings ; and fourthly, an area leased to the well-to-do. It very often happened that the owners of the small holdings hastened to exchange their allotments for cash and these pieces of land then went to swell the *latifundia* which were gradually coming into existence. An example often given is that of Cremona which received 6,000 families in the year 202. The immigrants proceeded to sell their land and went away —and so thoroughly was this process carried out that in the year 190 a further 6,000 families had to be sent.

Between 184 and 44 Rome established very numerous colonies in Italy, the principal being Pisaurum, Bologna, Parma, Potentia and Modena. But she proceeded in the same way in order to give security to her citizens in the annexed countries outside the Peninsula. In Spain, Scipio had already founded Italica ; Marcellus had founded Corduba (Cordoba), and Sempronius Gracchus had founded Gracchusis. Aquileia rose to the north-east of the valley of the Po on the frontier of Istria, not far from the modern Trieste, which also dates from the time of Cato the Elder. More than half a century later Narbo, Aquae Sextiae (Aix), Arelate (Arles) and Baeterrae in the province of Narbonensis received compact troops of Romans, together with their wives and families. Later, Carthage was repopulated and Caesar could boast of having sent 80,000 families overseas. But though the colonies continued in existence and towns developed on their sites, they did not serve to revive farming on a small scale. Everywhere, property underwent the same transformation and everywhere the *latifundia*, with their many evils, established an overwhelming predominance.

CHAPTER XII

MINERAL RESOURCES

DURING the first part of her history, until the Punic wars, Rome exploited her metal deposits but little. The successive conquests of the third and of the second and first centuries brought her provinces in which mines were numerous and in which it was only necessary to resume operations which had been begun long before. The countries of the Mediterranean which had not yet exhausted their veins of precious or base metal, and above all Spain and Macedonia, were naturally a tempting bait for the cupidity of the publicans. Every army which set forth on a campaign —whether against Mithridates or against Gaul—was accompanied by prospectors who, at the risk of their lives, sought for traces of gold and silver and who succeeded, thanks to prolonged effort, in becoming highly skilled, their marvellous intuition compensating for the deficiency of scientific knowledge.

The regime of the mines did not remain uniform throughout these 234 years. The Republic reserved to itself the revenue of the more important mines which it leased, according to the custom of the time, to great companies. Such was the case with the gold deposits of Vercellae, and the silver deposits of Cartagena, which gave employment to more than 40,000 workmen. When the workings of precious metals in Macedonia, leased in 168 by Aemilius Paulus, were reopened in 158, they were transferred against a large payment to the concession-holders, who also leased the mercury mines of Sisapon in Spain, celebrated throughout antiquity for their high and regular yield.

Apart, however, from these leased State enterprises there were undertakings of a private character. Crassus owed a portion of his gigantic income to the extraction of various minerals and other great personages accumulated fortunes in the neighbourhood of Aquileia which was then the centre of a district in which the gold deposits came up to the surface.

As early as the time of Cato the Elder the district of Tarragona furnished iron of a quality which was highly esteemed and which rivalled that of the isle of Elba, whose seams were inexhaustible. Caesar first acquainted the Italians with the mines of the Bituriges, the Aquitani and the other peoples of Gaul who were already exploiting their subterranean wealth.

Lead came from Baetica, where certain mines, leased for £8,000, yielded as much as 128 tons yearly, from the country of the Ruteni (Aveyron) and from Sardinia; copper from Tartessus (Tharsis) in Spain, from Cyprus and from Lusitania. When Gaul was proclaimed a province, the Veneti (Morbihan) were providing the Roman world with regular supplies of tin, a metal the more prized in that it was still extremely rare. The mercury deposits at Sisapon, which the Senate kept guarded by armed troops, dispatched more than 100,000 lbs. yearly in sealed boxes.

The precious metals were infinitely more abundant than in our own days in the whole Mediterranean district. Silver was worked near Cartagena, which yielded, it would appear, £1,000 worth daily, along the Pyrenees and in the Pangaeus range in Macedonia. Gold, which was gathered in the form of quartz from the rivers of Spain, Gaul, and Asia, was also met with in large deposits. Those of Vercellae —where the censors permitted the employment of a maximum of 5,000 men—(in the Subalpine region); those of Aquileia, where it was sufficient to dig two feet below the surface of the ground; those of Macedonia, where the plough frequently struck nuggets, and those of the Cevennes in Gaul were among the richest.

The Romans, who used stone for their enormous constructions, were ever alert in the search for new quarries in their domains. In most cases they had only to continue the work which had been begun by the annexed peoples, and the Greek Isles in this respect offered resources which were greatly valued. The neighbourhood of the capital furnished the common materials—tufa and travertine—which were obtained without difficulty in the Tibur and Fidenae districts and at the foot of Soracte. Salt, of the production and sale of which the Republic finally assumed a monopoly, in the fiscal interest, was obtained in Italy and also in Sicily, Macedonia and Gaul.

The white marble of Luna (Carrara) was famous at an early date but it was hardly before the days of Caesar that the Roman financiers devised ways and means for its extraction. Until then, and for more than a century, the only marble used was the Greek product obtained from Hymettus, Laurium, Pentelicus, Naxos, Paros and Euboea. Asia Minor and Africa even competed to furnish the fabric for the public monuments and the material for statues, while, at a far less distance from the capital, the Etruscan mountains contained deposits which century upon century had failed to exhaust.

The Romans and the peoples who lived under their dominion were naturally only in possession of poor equipment for working the mines and it improved extremely slowly. From the seventh to the first century B.C., the changes were but infinitesimal, and during the Imperial era they still seem to have been of very minor character. But the mechanical devices used in the Spanish workings, in the Subalpine district and in Laurium itself—the richest and best equipped—differed little from those used until the beginning of modern times. It is only the last hundred or hundred and twenty years which have witnessed the transformation of the mining industry.

The contemporaries of Cato and Cicero performed nearly all the work by hand. They used a *malleus* or hammer weighing from four to nine pounds, with a short handle, wedges, axes, picks, shovels and tongs, iron and bronze being both employed: they also had, for the purpose of breaking up the stone, rams reinforced with pieces of iron weighing 150 Roman lbs. (90 lbs. avoirdupois); whilst oil lamps, baskets and bronze cauldrons were absolute necessities. Only in the best-equipped mines were there to be found winches, tackle, chains of buckets, or windlasses—in short, the rudimentary mechanism which Archimedes and the various Alexandrian experts had invented.

The mines were sometimes open to the sky, sometimes worked underground. The galleries (*fossae*) which penetrated below the surface were pierced by means of iron instruments and were in general of narrow dimensions, as is easily explained by the lack of equipment for cutting through the seams. The height of these galleries varied from 2 ft.

to slightly over a yard, so that the miners were obliged to crawl, as they were later in the first collieries of the Nord and the Loire in France. Pit-timber was very costly and rare. The sides were therefore generally lined with piled stones and at intervals supporting pillars were erected. In the regions known to-day as Huelva and Rio Tinto, in Spain, the tunnels pierced in the metal deposits extended as far as 1980 yards and even four and a half miles, but for ventilation purposes several hundreds of twin shafts were sunk and at Rio Tinto nearly 1,000. The greatest vertical depth seems to have been 164 yards in Sardinia and 130 yards in Spain, the diameter of the shaft varying between $3\frac{1}{4}$ feet and 4 feet 4 inches. Notches for the feet and hands were cut in the rock. We can conceive what terrible exhaustion awaited the miners who were forced to climb up to the surface with a load of ore on their backs. At Laurium, in Gaul, in Etruria and at Rio Tinto, work was carried out level by level, the shifts being superimposed.

In order to expose the metal-bearing seams, methods differing considerably from one another were employed—methodically contrived falls in the subterranean galleries or the sudden diversion of strong streams of water rapidly changed the aspect of the seams and offered fresh hewing surfaces to miners. Thus extraction progressed, not without risk for those who worked at it. In the marble quarries of Paros and Pentelicus, the blocks slid along inclined planes and a regular system of rollers and cables permitted of their removal as they were produced. Then, by knocking down the pillars holding the roofs, the miners—often at the risk of being crushed—caused huge masses to fall, through which they endeavoured to cut a path.

It is easy to understand that every mine employed numerous hands, when we take into consideration the utterly insufficient equipment which was then in use. The boring of galleries and the making of levels would otherwise have led to impracticable delays. The *metallarii* or miners, and the *exemptores* or quarrymen worked in very dense gangs. There were at Laurium thousands of slaves, whose revolts on several occasions proved dangerous. There were 5,000 at Vercellae and, as we have already seen, 40,000 at Cartagena. The latter number seems enormous when it

is compared with that of the whole mining army of France, which comprises 200,000, of whom 10,000 to 12,000 belong to each of the two largest coal concessions of the Nord and Pas-de-Calais. It was, however, at that time necessary to bring together considerable masses of captives and even of free men, in order to obtain even a small output.

The ancient writers have left us interesting particulars of the manner in which the ore was treated, for in those days of difficult communications the metallurgical operations were conducted in the neighbourhood of the mines. Crushing, washing and smelting were carried out in works situated, so to speak, on the spot. At Laurium, for example, where the deposits of galena were counted amongst the richest, reservoirs, a network of canals, and drying-places were installed; facilities were also provided for passing the pounded ore through sieves, often as frequently as five times.

The treatment of gold with mercury was certainly known long before the time of Pliny, who has left details of the process on record. Lead was first melted in a furnace and then, in cases where the two were found in combination, separated from the silver by cupellation. The furnaces were heated by pine or oak logs. The metals were run into ingots which bore the mark of the manufacturer. The operations were performed by several categories of workers, but specialization was not carried very far, the same men being frequently employed in crushing, sorting, and smelting: it should be added that the work, like that in the mines, was conducted day and night.

At Cartagena, where silver was found in an almost pure state, the nuggets, according to Polybius, were pounded, then sieved in water; the sediment was again pounded and finally smelted.

At Cyprus, a copper centre, the chief substance obtained was native copper, or its carbonate, the treatment of copper pyrites being still little known. As for iron, the processes which were employed in the isle of Elba and which were of very remote date seem to have made their way into general use. All primitive metallurgy thus left residues, which it was possible to exploit much later with profit.

CHAPTER XIII

INDUSTRY

IF we look at the industrial development of the second period of the Republic we find that its characteristics, as a whole, may be fairly clearly descried. Manufacture was revolutionized by the conquests, which, whilst they led to the putting into circulation of adequate supplies of currency and were accompanied by an ever-increasing contingent of captive workers, initiated the Romans into the technical processes of Greece and Asia and engendered new standards of comfort and luxury. Unity of production was disappearing at the same time as the simplicity of former days. Although it did not become entirely detached from the land—for the *latifundia* still remained centres for weaving and pottery—and without entirely ceasing to be domestic—for the great still required their "town families" to make the garments of current wear—industry came to acquire a very genuine independence. At the same time, it assumed more complex forms and was characterized by a more regular output in proportion as the Romans borrowed the refinements of the eastern world and increased their demand for manufactured articles. The division of labour, unknown at the beginning, gradually increased, without, however, at any time arriving at the extreme specialization which can alone be justified by the mechanical resources of our own age; certain towns acquired, as will be seen, either owing to the quality of their cloths or their vases, or because of their natural wealth of raw materials, what amounted to monopolies.

Nevertheless, servile labour, which left but little room for free labour, put its spoke in the wheel of this development, clearly marked though it was; the crudity of the technical processes employed kept the textile industry, gold working and pottery in a condition of semi-stagnation; not until later were the secrets of glass-blowing to be surrendered to the Italians. In short, the cities of the

eastern Mediterranean retained the first place in manufacture and the most populated centres of the Peninsula competed against them in vain. In the Roman world of the second and first centuries the most recently annexed portions predominated by reason of their greater skill and better equipment.

We will review rapidly the main industries and indicate the localities in which they prospered; but first we must enumerate the stages of scientific progress and the inventions which had become common property between the Punic Wars and the Civil Wars and had influenced production in general. Neither this progress nor the inventions attained the importance which is sometimes attributed to them. Whatever may be the impetus that the school of Alexander or Archimedes himself gave to mechanical development, to hydrostatics and to chemistry and whatever useful apparatus had been found by the generals during their campaigns in Asia and made public property upon their return, the total of innovations in this relatively lengthy period was not very noteworthy.

It is true that we must not underestimate or disregard the enormous efforts which were made by the learned men of Hellenized Egypt who were brought together and maintained by Ptolemy Soter in his famous Museum; this is not the place to disparage the imposing work of Archimedes, of Ctesibius and of Hieron, but, although these great men enunciated principles which were until then unknown and although they added considerable riches to the patrimony of truths which humanity has accumulated for itself, they did not draw from their discoveries the practical conclusions which were drawn at a much later date.

Nevertheless, industry benefited, thanks to them, by new machinery which simplified its task or opened out fresh fields. Though it is an exaggeration to say that Hireon created a steam-engine in the first century, and though his boiler—a closed vessel but for a vertical tube—was only an experimental apparatus, the men of science of that day nevertheless gave their contemporaries the pulley, the continuous screw, pumps, bent syphons, fountains and water-clocks. Machines driven by water or by wind made their appearance in Italy when Pompey returned from the east.

Chemical knowledge increased also, and the conclusions which had been reached in this field suggest that a more copious and exact technique had come into existence. The process of making alloys was known, as was soldering and the preparation of lime-water, of oxides, of white-lead and of copper sulphate. The processes of bleaching wool by means of the vapour given off by burning sulphur, of converting iron into steel, and of manufacturing dyes of new colours, essences, salves and pomades had been learned. More was known about the uses of heat. The empirical methods of the Hellenized towns of Asia and the theoretical research of the physicists of Egypt helped to diversify, to stimulate and to facilitate industrial needs.

It can hardly be expected that we should examine here in detail the activities of the various trades. But we must glance at them.

The first operations to which ore was subjected on leaving the mine have already been rapidly reviewed. A large number of towns delivered abundant quantities of metal utensils and even of veritable works of art. In Rome itself there existed among others the following craftsmen—sometimes of free condition but generally recruited from the slave population—modellers (*figuratores*), founders (*fusores*), turners (*tritores*), embossers (*crustarii*) and gilders (*dauratores*) and we may therefore conclude that specialization had advanced to a fairly considerable extent. Most of the artisans in precious metals worked in both gold and silver but there were also specialists who confined themselves to a single craft—such as the *argentarii*, who made silver jewellery, and the *aurifices* who made gold rings, hairpins, etc.

The manufacture of armour flourished in the capital. Mantua, Ticinum, Comum, Brundusium, Tarentum, Corinth—and also Capua, of whose excellent productions Cato the Elder had already boasted—excelled in copper and bronze work. The *fabri aerarii*, that is to say, the bronze workers (amongst whom a further differentiation into *candelabrarii* and *laternarii* was made—the names indicate the form which specialization had taken) manufactured vases ornamented with relief work, pots, jugs, dishes, stoves, fireplaces, tongs, tripods, chairs, beds, copper lamps, nails,

needles, pins, weights and balances. Bronze was at that time much more currently used than now.

The iron manufacturing centres, the workers in which were known as *fabri ferrarii*, were Rome and Minturnae as early as the third century, than Syracuse, Rhegium, Venafrum and Sulmo in the country of the Peligni. Outside Italy, the Celtiberi, the inhabitants of Toledo and the Bituriges in Gaul enjoyed a reputation equal to that of the most famous towns of Asia.

The art of the potter, whose processes were borrowed from the Etruscans and from the Hellenic and eastern countries, became a very considerable industry, both in respect of the more common productions—the earthenware barrels (*dolia*) with a maximum capacity of 944 litres, which were used in Rome to hold the commoner sorts of wine—and of the products of a less primitive art, such as table vessels and ornaments. Well-equipped pottery establishments of considerable extent were annexed to the *latifundia*. They turned out vessels of all shapes and bricks marked with the name of the owner which were used for building purposes in town and country. In the time of Sulla, when the use of tiles became general, five different kinds were in existence.

The *opus doliare*, that is to say, ordinary pottery, was to some extent monopolized in the capital and its surroundings by the consular families who tied down to this labour hundreds and thousands of slaves and drew large incomes from it. Salvioli tells us that it was one of the forms of industry into which the capitalist system was most promptly introduced. Clay barrels still came from Tibur, from Casinum (as Cato tells us), from Cales in Campania, from Megara, Venafrum, Corinth, Rhodes and various islands of the Archipelago in which the vine was cultivated.

The *opus figlinum*, or fine pottery, had become the staple occupation of a number of cities of peninsular Italy which competed with the still famous centres of Greece and Asia. The Romans had ended by appropriating for themselves some of the arts which the vanquished taught them ; it was the vanquished, moreover, who—reduced to servile status and forced labour—perfected production. Thus the lessons of Etruria and early Magna Graecia, which always retained the lead in certain directions, combined with those of the

Hellenized countries of the East. The writers of the first century speak of the table services of Arretium and of the vases of Modena, Pollentia, Asta, Velleia in Liguria, of Cumae, Capua, Rhegium and Sorrentum, in the southern countries. Outside Italy, Samos remained the most famous pottery centre. Saguntum and Tarragona in Spain were classed considerably below Samos.

Whilst, in the second century, the potters of Rome imitated with some degree of skill the fine specimens which were imported, the rich still made it a point of honour to buy the local products as little as possible.

Builders, who used large numbers of the rougher kinds of brick, had less recourse to the hard stone of Latium and still less to the rare materials which the richest citizens imported from overseas. Alpine granite and that obtained from Upper Egypt remained extremely costly. The openings by which the houses were lighted were provided with large sheets of mica. These were also very costly and were consequently not in universal use.

Masons used the rule, the set square, the plumbline, the toise, the measuring cord, the shovel, and the trowel. The mechanical resources for lifting and moving the blocks were rudimentary and scarce; the erection of a stone palace consequently called for terrible physical effort. The subdivisions of the building trade—which only existed in the large towns—were classified fairly completely as lime-burners (*calcis coctores*), masons (*structores*), arch-builders (*arcuarii*), partition-makers (*parietarii*), plasterers (*tectores*), whitewashers (*albarii*), cement makers (*cementarii*), marble-layers (*marmorarii*), and others. This elaborate division of labour points to a large amount of building in the latter period of the Republic and to the fact that the building craze had seized upon the senatorial and equestrian families. No other industry could shew a comparable degree of specialization. The private house of the great epoch, which had taken the place of the primitive hut, combined ideas borrowed from the Etruscans—above all the *atrium*—with others drawn from Greek architecture—more particularly the peristyle. The atrium was a more or less extensive court, reached from outside by a corridor and used for the reception of strangers. The peristyle, separated from the

atrium by the private office of the proprietor and by certain other rooms (the *triclinium*, or dining-room being the most important) was a second court surrounded by pillars, around which the sleeping rooms were arranged. Certain houses were sumptuously decorated and furniture imported from afar stood side by side with that made in Rome. In the first century, the cathedra or padded chair and the plain bench for two or more persons were the two forms of seat. Beds were of wood or bronze and were provided with rugs ; sheets and pillows were unknown. Tables, stools and sideboards completed the installation, which even at the end of the Republic was already as complex and rich in the great families as it was under the Empire.

Of all manufacturing activities, that of weaving was the one which found work for most human hands and was the widest spread in the world conquered by Rome. Wool and linen, but chiefly the former, were the two main raw materials of the textile industry at the end of the Republic.

The source of wool in Italy was the large flocks of sheep which found their pasture on the slopes of the Apennines ; the numbers of sheep in the Asiatic provinces rivalled those of the best-situated countries in this respect. The various operations involved in the manufacture of cloth were practised from the earliest days : after being soaked in vats the wool pulp was trodden, then beaten, pulled, dried, and carded with the help of a plant called *spina fullonica* : it was subsequently sulphured, brushed, trimmed and pressed. The paintings of the *fullonica* at Pompeii are for us an invaluable source of documentation. Besides the dyers (*offertores*) the ordinary corporations which participated in these processes were the following : carders or *carminatores*, weavers or *textores*, and fullers or *fullones*.

The last-named, whose functions were very important, worked in huge establishments which called for equipment on a large scale. As the fullers' workshops consumed large quantities of liquid, they were installed near aqueducts or basins in masonry were specially constructed for them. It is interesting to observe that a law of the Republic—the text of which we unfortunately do not possess—regulated the work of the fullers.

The working of wool, which had remained in part domestic, was carried out in many *latifundia* but the products were far from being reserved for the needs of the estates and the trade which the woolworkers fed developed greatly in the two last centuries whilst the treatment of textiles grew into a powerful industry. It was above all prosperous in places where purple, the dye *par excellence*, was found; of this the most famous factories were at Tyre, Lydda, Caesarea, Tarentum, Puteoli, Ancona and Baiae. Tarentum, Syracuse, Cumae, Luceria and Canusium in Apulia produced woollen goods of far greater repute than those of Rome. Parma and Modena possessed factories on a large scale with armies of free and servile workers. Verona sold carpets but the stuffs imported from Asia—certain of which, made of pure gold thread, may still be seen in the museums of Naples and of Arles—were greatly preferred by fashionable people. Byblos, Tyre and Berytus did not reduce their output when they passed under Roman dominion. Miletus and Ephesus made admirable tunics and Laodicea had a sort of monopoly of tapestry. The material woven in the valley of the Ebro, in Lusitania and in Narbonensis, though it sufficed for local requirements, never acquired world-wide fame.

Flax, for its part, furnished raw material for the manufactures of Cispadane and Transpadane Gaul, which were grouped around Padua, and for the less numerous establishments of Etruria. The veils made in Tarquinii were much sought after. Embroidery, in which the Phrygians had at all times excelled, began to be manufactured in Rome towards the end of the Republic and the embroiderers were justly known as *Phrygiones*. The clothing guilds earned their living without difficulty whether shirtmakers (*indunarii*), tailors (*sartores*), shoemakers or others in spite of the ruinous competition which the free artisans had to face from the slaves of the great estates. But it was also in these small trades and in those of the baker, the confectioner and the butcher, in a word in the food-retailing trades, that this artisan class preserved itself best. The baker, with his hand-mill, which was replaced very late by the water-mill, the pastry-cook, with his extremely simple equipment, and the butcher with his knife were hardly afraid of fighting the cumbersome organization of the aristocratic

houses, but the latter, thanks to the multiplicity of their domestic services, kept for themselves the richest and most regular clientele.

The extension of conquest, by bringing new requirements into existence and opening the door to new forms of pleasure, had thus engendered on the Tiber an industrial activity far greater than that of the earlier ages: Rome had set herself the task of developing within her gates or in their immediate neighbourhood the crafts which should supply all the requirements of her governing class. Furthermore, the incessant campaigns had added to the domain of the victorious metropolis cities which were infinitely in advance of her in respect of cultivated taste and technical dexterity, and this metropolis, which had subjugated men, pillaged treasure and added province to province, remained more and more dependent upon the nations which she had crushed by force of arms but which had retained their manufacturing superiority. In this lies the explanation of the commercial currents which we are about to define and which brought to the centre far more wares of all kinds than they carried away towards the outer fringes.

CHAPTER XIV

TRADE

TRADE between Rome and the various parts of her territory, as well as with the countries which the armies had not yet subjected, did not cease to grow in the latter centuries of the Republic, as it was to grow again in the first centuries of the Empire. There was, after the wars of Syria and Macedonia and above all after the defeat of Mithridates, both a domestic and a foreign trade which, although their extent was by no means remarkable, were nevertheless measurable in the equivalent of millions of pounds sterling. Naturally no statistics are available of the movement of goods from one province to another, for the records of the customs or *portoria*, which would have been invaluable to us and would have furnished at least some basis for comparison, were nowhere preserved: nevertheless, to judge by the quantity and quality of the products which the great families of Rome received from the remotest districts and by the character of the goods which accumulated in the principal warehouses of the Mediterranean, we may say that this trade, at the time when Octavius crushed Antonius and seized supreme power, was of dimensions unprecedented in history.

Neither the Phœnician cities, nor those of Greece, nor yet Carthage, had hitherto brought into the scope of their speculations so vast an area as that covered by the trade of Rome. Hitherto, commerce had hardly gone beyond the coasts, and the coasts had been divided between rival economic influences. The merchants of the Roman world were not content to exploit an enormous expanse of coast, now under a single authority, but they penetrated deeply into the hinterland, and, hundreds of miles from the sea, they aroused the instincts of gain and of commerce.

Undoubtedly, Rome needed both West and East and, with her great agglomerations of human beings and her luxurious civilization, she could not live without the

assistance of the most varied countries. But these countries, in their turn, counted for their prosperity upon the increasingly exacting clientele of the capital. Deprived of their wealth by the victorious generals, they made fresh fortunes by exploiting the sumptuous living and the fastidious and effeminate tastes which had spread to the Tiber. Rome had tried to imitate Greece and Asia and the ruling classes of the half-civilized peoples tried to imitate Rome : thus the commercial current grew ever swifter and wider until a point was reached when—as in our own days—hundreds of thousands of people, myriads of intermediaries, were able to derive a living by establishing a link between producers and consumers.

It was not only cereals that the metropolis demanded of the various Mediterranean countries—the tributary countries like Sicily or Africa, or the autonomous ones, like Egypt, which remained free until after Actium. She required wine, fruit, edible animals, all the costly wares the use of which the sumptuary laws had vainly forbidden, and slaves. As Montesquieu has shewn, the store of gold and silver accumulated by the army commanders hardly reached Rome when it again began to move back towards the frontiers.

It must not, however, be supposed that the trade of the two last centuries of the Republic—or even that of the last thirty years—was comparable to that which statistics shew to-day for countries of even small size, such as Belgium or Holland. In the first place, dealings in agricultural supplies were far from attaining the same importance and the mass of the peasants of the Peninsula and of the provinces grew far more for their own consumption than for sale ; the distribution of industrial articles was necessarily restricted by the technically backward state of manufacture on the one hand and by the continued existence of a very considerable household industry on the other. Again, the general standard of wealth remaining very low, the number of potential purchasers was relatively small. It should not be forgotten that the regions subjected at the end of the first century to the dominion of Rome, i.e. in modern language, Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, part of Algeria and Tunis, Greece, Epirus, Illyria, Asia Minor, Syria and the isles, contained

only a sparse population on the average much below that of to-day; nor must we overlook the fact that the Graeco-Roman civilization, with all its needs, was not extended to this vast domain and that the servile contingent, which consumed very little, represented a large part of the general population. Let us add that on many occasions—as in the time of Sextus Pompeius and in the time of the war against the pirates—the sea routes were closed, that more or less permanent civil struggles made the roads dangerous, that in these turbulent times merchants hesitated to conduct business on long credit and finally that the slowness of transport prejudiced certain forms of trade and in any case rendered impossible that in perishable foodstuffs. It will then be readily understood that, whilst giving full value to the extent of economic relationships which had come into existence for the first time or had resumed their original place in the Mediterranean area, great care must be taken not to exaggerate them.

We have seen that cereals came from Sicily, Sardinia and Africa, that Greek wines, especially those of Corcyra (Corfu) and of Clazomenae were prized, that oil was in part imported from Spain and that one of the major divisions of that country, Baetica, furnished base and precious metals. But it was the East, above all, which furnished Rome and the great Italian cities with the rare and costly industrial products which they demanded in huge quantities. Apamea, Laodicea, Cibyra, Miletus, Ephesus, Samos, Tralles, Smyrna, Pergamum, Abydos, Nicomedia, Seleucia and Antioch, the productions of which were many and varied, carried on a large export trade, more particularly with Rome. The capital purchased from these towns the beautiful cloths, the embroideries and the carpets which, for luxury and fine work, were in advance of similar products in the Peninsula.

Egypt had a great many industries of her own. Not only did she excel in the manufacture of linen garments and of cloth, which the whole of the known world bought from the workshops of Alexandria, Tanis, Pelusium and Canopus, but from an early period she had manufactured cotton and her coloured cotton cloths were extremely expensive. She also exported to Rome her palm-wood,

her rough and her artistic glass wares, in which the artisans of the Delta were past masters, and her celebrated papyrus, which rivalled and ousted parchment—thus named from Pergamum, whence it was derived. The waters of the Nile furnished the raw material. The reeds hold triangular growths which contain the pith : this pith was cut, spread in thin strips on planks moistened with water; above this first layer, which was covered with starch paste, a further layer was placed at right angles ; then the whole was pressed and polished. The manufacturers of Alexandria, who enjoyed a virtual monopoly, derived large revenues from the sale of this papyrus. With her very dense and very hard-working population, Egypt had moreover won for herself, under the Ptolomies, an extraordinary manufacturing situation. The treasure of the Ptolemies, maintained by very heavy land taxes, by high customs duties and by monopolies covering nitre, salt, gold and copper mines, ivory, oil and wine, was greater than that of Rome, and the inhabitants, crushed though they may have been under the burden of taxes, had attained a remarkably high degree of civilization. Great public works, costing fabulous sums, had joined the Nile to the Red Sea and established ports where there had previously been but desert sands. Appian relates that Ptolemy II Philadelphus, whose activities in this connexion were noteworthy and who died in the year 246 B.C., left 740,000 talents or the equivalent of more than £140,000,000. Even if we admit that this figure is greatly exaggerated, it shews at least that the prosperity of the sovereign of Egypt was legendary and that the trade of the country from the third century B.C. appeared extremely important. And this trade did not cease to grow in the second and first centuries, stimulated in great part by the growing demands of Rome.

Arabia and Judaea sent to the Tiber their perfumes and their spices, which the great equestrian and senatorial families never found too expensive. Towards the end of the Republic, India sent her silks rivalling those of China, which were already known.

The roads of Central Asia were regularly used by merchants, who lived by the various trades of the East. One road went through the district south of the Caucasus, the Caspian

Sea and the valley of the Oxus ; the other went directly from the coast of Syria to the Red Sea and served Arabia. One of its stages was marked by the city of Petra—a strange town constructed along immense walls of rock on the great ravine which runs from the Gulf of Akaba to the Dead Sea. Founded in 312 B.C. by the Nabataei who, according to Diodorus, traded in metals, perfumes and purple between the Mediterranean and the Parthian country, Petra became very powerful in the first century, defied the efforts of Pompey and remained the chief headquarters of the caravans until the day when the city of Palmyra robbed her of her pre-eminence.

After Rome, the great commercial centres of the Roman world at the end of the Republic were Gades (Cadiz) and Cartagena for Spain, Marseilles for Narbonensis and independent Gaul, Corinth and Delos for the Hellenic countries, and finally Alexandria, which brought together all the products of Egypt and part of those of Arabia, Syria and other eastern lands.

Marseilles continually lost ground in favour of Aquae Sextiae (Aix) and Narbo (Narbonne), but she retained for some time the lead which she derived from her port and her experience. She had monopolized the trade of the Rhône valley and even of the more remote regions of Celtica. Long before the arrival of Caesar, Gaul had regular trade currents : Bordeaux, Nantes, Arles, Geneva, Vienne, Orléans and Rouen, to use their modern names, were well-frequented markets drawing their supplies of cloth from the numerous factories of the northern district, of iron from the forges of the Bituriges and Aedui and of rough pottery from the Remi. A whole proletariat—free or enslaved—contributed to an industrial output which was by no means negligible and which itself furnished abundant exports. Proof that trade had outgrown the primitive phase is furnished by the fact that, from the 3rd century, coins were struck in imitation of the Greek money—pieces of gold, of electron or of bronze, which varied from town to town. When the Roman traders penetrated as far as Gaul they were surprised by the economic development which they found there and by the manufacturing activities of certain cities, such as Bibracte.

Relations were established at an early date between

Narbonensis and the independent regions which completely enveloped it. Caravans of merchandise went from the Rhône and the Saône to the Moselle, the Meuse and the Rhine. A regular transport system was in existence across the Cevennes and across the plateaus between the rivers. There were, if not good roads, at least tracks used by waggons and by more rapidly-moving vehicles. Thanks to them, Marseilles, so long as she was the great entrepôt of Gaul, was in communication with the shores of the Channel and with the Atlantic coast, which was dominated by the Veneti, who owned powerful vessels and sought for tin along the British seaboard. It has been calculated that the average speed attained along the regular routes was from 33 to 36 miles per day and treble this distance could be covered in the same time by sea. From Port Vendres to the Bay of Biscay the route usually followed took seven days. The old Phocaean colony had acquired wealth, thanks to the transit trade which, however, other cities took from it again at the time of Caesar.

Corinth, risen from her ruins, acquired in the first century more importance than any other Hellenic city had ever had. But Delos, after the dispossession of Rhodes, challenged her pre-eminence and it is well known that this island derived her wealth mainly from the slave traffic.

Alexandria enjoyed yet greater fame. With her hundreds of thousands of inhabitants, she was not only one of the most populated capitals in the world, but—thanks to her papyrus, glass, linen and cotton manufactures—she occupied more than a mere place in the first rank of industrial centres. For she brought together in her harbour the products of the whole Hellenized and barbarian east. A truly international market from the time when Ptolemy Soter conducted to a successful end the enterprises ordered by Alexander, she had received from Sostratus of Cnidus equipment on a grand scale. Her lighthouse was the admiration of navigators and her arsenal, her merchant port, or *Eunostos*, her breakwater or *Heptastadion*, were acquisitions which assured her glory and prosperity. She drew to herself, to send later to Rome, the cereals and oils of her fertile Delta, the perfumes of Arabia, the purple of Tyre, the gold and gems of the Upper Nile and the silks of China and India and this trade brought

her in profits which the increase in world traffic tended incessantly to augment.

The Roman *negotiatores*, i.e. the merchants, brokers and agents, usually backed by usurers, spread through Europe and Asia, whilst the legions conquered new territory. Often indeed they preceded the legions, at the risk of their lives, and prepared by their negotiations the way for subsequent military operations. Suspected and threatened by the populations in whose midst they installed themselves, they nevertheless stood their ground. They patiently continued their work. Terrible massacres took place at Delos, in Pontus and the neighbouring countries and also in Gaul. The *negotiatores*, whether as agents of the great syndicates of publicans or as exploiters of their own interests, reappeared immediately after this organized carnage. The place of those who had been mown down never remained empty. These pioneers of Rome, whose greed aroused ineffaceable hatred, had at least the courage of their trade.

They were the purveyors of luxury to the great families and they took a heavy toll in exchange for their pains and their risks. It was they who, by founding counting houses, by crossing the Rhine and by oppressing the Germans long before Caesar's soldiers had sounded their trumpets there, created great trade currents which were to remain in existence. They formed relationships, instituted commercial customs, calculated the respective values of the different currencies, weights and measures and announced the new order of things and the fundamental unity that was to prevail throughout the Empire. When the governors of newly annexed provinces wished to bring the local systems into agreement with those to which they were accustomed, they found that the *negotiatores* had already solved the difficulties.

Freedom of trade was far from complete. Rome, anxious for the food supply of her population, imposed numerous export prohibitions. The export from Italy of arms, iron, wine, oil and cereals was completely forbidden. Similar or somewhat more limited prohibitions existed in certain provinces. Customs duties, known as *portoria*, were imposed upon the entry of the most varied products. They amounted to 5% in Sicily, according to Cicero, to 2% in Spain and to

2½% elsewhere. Suppressed at the beginning of the Republic, they were not long in reappearing, for they represented a steady source of income for the treasury. In 198 the customs of Capua and Puteoli, which had just been established, were leased to publicans and from that date all the maritime entrepôts were subjected to more or less the same regime. In the year 60, the *portoria* were once more abolished, but only for a few years, for Caesar revived them. In combination with the city toll-houses and with the vexatious demands of the governors, they became a still greater burden upon trade, since goods passing across several provinces had to pay duty at each frontier. We do not possess, in respect of the Republican era, a map showing the customs boundaries, but very fortunately such a map showing the situation under the Empire is still in existence.

It must be added that the Senate did not hesitate to order certain towns to amend their octroi tariffs in favour of Roman citizens and that the exemptions of all kinds which were granted to the latter practically concentrated trade in their hands.

CHAPTER XV

ROADS

THE great roads, which increased in number under the Republic, contributed to render trade easier. It is indeed clear that a widespread system of economic relationships could not have been created in the interior of the country unless roads capable of being used by all classes of vehicles had been constructed and kept in repair. Important though the traffic conducted by means of sea-going and river navigation was, it could not satisfy every requirement. It came about that the roads, which were constructed in the first place to transport the legions, to ensure the subjugation of the conquered countries, the suppression of any revolts which might break out and the passage of officials of all classes, were used in the interests of commerce. This was probably an unexpected result, but it was none the less welcomed by the statesmen of the Republic.

The Appian Way, opened in the fourth century, served as a model for other roads, which were opened in regular succession in the three last centuries B.C. and connected Rome first with the various cities of Italy and later with the main centres of the provinces.

The Appian Way was itself prolonged to a length of 347 miles and, running in the first place to Capua only, it continued in the time of Caesar as far as Brindisi, the point of embarkation for Epirus and Greece. Aurelius Cotta, who was censor in 241, that is to say at the time when the first Punic war was coming to an end, created the Aurelian Way which ended at Antipolis or Antibes, passing through Centum Cellae (Civitavecchia), Pisae (Pisa) and Genua (Genoa), thus following along its whole length the foot of the Apennines and the Alps. The Via Flaminia, which was completed before the second Punic war, touched Ariminum (Rimini) and Aquileia, after piercing the central ridge of the Peninsula by means of a tunnel; branches also led to the towns now known as Viterbo and Foligno. The

BRIDGE AT ARIMINUM.
Built by Augustus and Tiberius, on the Via Æmilia.
(By kind permission of the Council of The Roman Society.)

[face p. 200.

Salarian Way led to the Adriatic through Fidenae, Cures and Reate (Rieti), the Via Nomentana to Nomentum and the Gabinian Way to Tibur (Tivoli), a favourite country resort from the time of the Civil Wars. The Via Collatina went direct to the east, the Via Praenestina towards Beneventum in Samnium, the Via Labicana to Anagnia (Anagni) and the Via Latina to Teanum (Teano), where it joined the Appian Way, the Valerian Way to Asculum, the Via Ardeatina to Ardea, the Via Campania to Campania, the Via Laurentina to Laurentum and the Via Ostiana to Ostia. These were the principal roads in Italy but others crossed Gaul, Epirus, Macedonia, and Greece and in the second century the earliest considerable works were accomplished in Narbonensis. It should also be added that the Carthaginians, the inhabitants of the Asiatic cities and the Gauls had for their part constructed tracks which were kept more or less in repair in order to facilitate the transport of merchandise: it will thus be seen that on the whole, towards the end of the Republic, a certain regularity of communications existed.

Even the Alps and the Pyrenees had become accessible. The former had, as early as 75 B.C. been crossed by the Herculean road, which traversed Mont Genèvre and led from the valley of the Dora Riparia to that of the Durance, that is to say, from the Po to the Rhône. The Great St. Bernard, the Little Saint Bernard, the Simplon and the Splügen were opened up by paths which slowly improved until they were replaced by proper roads.

The roads, which at that time for the most part had Rome as their point of departure—a characteristic which showed what their nature was—were not yet all provided with "milestones", the mile being equivalent to 1,481½ metres (1,619 yards). It was not until the time of Augustus that the famous golden milestone, *milliarum aureum*, was set up in the Forum and that the *viae* were painstakingly surveyed, but it is certain that milestones were erected far earlier along certain arteries in order to permit travellers to ascertain their whereabouts. Polybius, who wrote in the middle of the second century, refers to such on the via Domitia and a milestone has been discovered which dates from 131.

Constructed by the legions at the order of the generals and at times by the riverside populations who were compelled to execute hard tasks of this kind, the *viae* were frequently paved, though paving was not general until the Empire. Several portions of the Appian Way, near Capua, had marble flagstones and the nature of the paving varied according to the district.

The normal "via" properly so-called was at least 8 feet wide in the straight and 16 feet wide in the curved sections, but even if we accept the Via Sacra, the first-class roads (the Appian Way, the Valerian Way, etc.) were 21 to 24 feet wide, the footways or banks accounting for a quarter or more. The *actus* measured as little as 4 feet, the *iter* 3 or 2 and the *semita* or footpath 1 foot.

We have shown that the magistrates, when they ordered these roads to be made, were chiefly concerned to guarantee the military power of the city and to simplify the collection of taxes. But although the posts, with their successive stages, were reserved for officials and for privileged individuals who had obtained official authorization, the roads themselves, especially in the neighbourhood of the large towns, were crowded with vehicles, fast and slow, with four wheels or with two, which carried merchandise of all kinds. The speed attained by the private stage-coaches which were in use at the end of the Republic, was 120 km. (75 miles) per day and it seems to have been possible to go from Rome to Aquileia—500 miles—in 100 hours.

The roads, however, afford us but a partial glimpse of the great public works which followed one another in the last two centuries. Certain of these enterprises must be succinctly mentioned, for they measure the power of construction of the Romans and illustrate their common sense and initiative in this connexion. Millions of men were employed, for mechanical methods remained too little developed to allow of any economy of man-power.

Three new aqueducts were constructed. In 146, the waters of the canal of Appius and those of the canal of M. Curius Dentatus, which dated respectively from 313 and 273, were no longer sufficient and the Marcian aqueduct was added at a cost of more than £2,000,000: its length was 61,710 paces (60 miles), of which 52,247 were below

ground. It was executed by 3,000 slave-masters to whom the censors had given contracts. In 127, the Aqua Tepula tapped the waters of Tusculum and in 35 the Aqua Julia was the last constructed during the Republic. It was 15,426 paces long—about 14 miles—of which 7,000 were subterranean.

It will be seen later that the authorities had in view other and more elaborate undertakings of a different order for which the economic expansion of the time was pressing imperiously.

CHAPTER XVI

NAVIGATION

SEA and river trade was much more important in the days of antiquity, and especially in those of the Romans, than land-borne commerce and we can hardly be surprised at the fact. Not until railways were constructed were the relations of the one form of communication to the other, if not completely reversed, at least greatly changed throughout the world. We know, however, that in the first centuries, Rome, who had no ships of her own, had recourse for her limited trade to the Greek, Etruscan and Phœnician fleets. She was, in truth, until the end of the Republic, dependent upon allied or annexed peoples, and shewed little taste herself for seafaring.

Her fighting ships made their earliest appearance during the first Punic war. As the Carthaginians were better equipped in this regard, it became essential to contest the passages of the Mediterranean and to prevent the dispatch of expeditionary corps to Sicily. At the end of two months the Senate had 120 ships at its service ; a few months later it possessed 330 and certain of these units were by no means to be despised, since, according to Polybius, they held as many as 300 or 400 rowers.

Nevertheless, this squadron, decimated by battles and neglected after Zama, finally disappeared from existence. It became necessary to seek the assistance of the Rhodians against Antiochus of Syria at the beginning of the second century and it was to them again that Pompey turned in the first century in order to put down the terrible pirates who were cutting the lines of navigation, and Cicero in his *Pro Lege Manilia* deplored the naval impotence of his country. In order to fight the Veneti of Morbihan and to carry troops to England, Caesar was obliged to construct ships, lock, stock and barrel—in fact to improvise a fleet.

The Roman ships had a pine hull and a false keel of oak. The joints were caulked with tow, the planks were fastened

down with bronze nails, the anchors were of iron and the sails of canvas. Sailing or rowing, an average speed of six miles an hour was maintained. We are unaware whether there were at that time such powerful vessels as those of the imperial epoch but it is certain that the tonnage was small—about eighty.

Apart from the great ports which have been mentioned, Alexandria and Delos, there were a number of others on the coast of the Peninsula, of Greece, of Gaul and of Asia Minor. None attained the importance of the Egyptian entrepôt but many showed considerable activity. Ostia, which dated from the earliest centuries, tended to decline after the Punic wars. The regular silting of the Tiber blocked the entrance with sand and made the approaches so dangerous that 200 vessels foundered in a single night of gale. The ships therefore remained outside the harbour and boats put out to take the cargoes with which they later went up the river. Ostia, which Caesar hoped to improve, imported the heavy merchandise and exported goods coming from the eastern slopes of the Apennines. Puteoli, which had taken the place of the older city of Dicaearchia, a colony of Cumae, appears in history immediately after the second Punic War. It was here that the costly products arrived which were sent by Greece and by the countries of the East and which subsequently found their way to the Appia Via and to Rome by the Via Campania. The other maritime centres of Italy were Tarracina and Centum Cellae, the latter of which only developed later, on the Tyrrhenian Sea, Ravenna, Ancona, Brindisi, Otranto and Tarentum on the Adriatic. Sicily had Messina, Panormus, Agrigentum and Syracuse: on the coasts of the Archipelago or in the islands there were, besides Corinth, Delos and Rhodes, Byzantium, Smyrna, Miletus and Ephesus; on the African coast Carthage, Bona, Dellys, Shershell (to adopt their modern names); in Spain Cartagena and Saguntum; in Gaul, besides Narbo and Marseilles, there were Arles and Fréjus. Arles owed to the *Fossa Mariana*, a canal cut by Marius at the time of the campaign against the Cimbri, an activity which increased so continuously that she came to rival Narbo in the claim to carry the commerce of the whole hinterland. Caesar favoured the latter city; he also set up an arsenal at Fréjus,

which at that time was only separated from the sea by a strip of sand. Many of these ports were natural, others had been constructed not without difficulty, with the aid of stone breakwaters or moles; but the works of the Republican period cannot be compared with those of the Imperial epoch, which we shall consider later; the quays were still of small extent and the basins shallow.

Evidence goes to show that there were lighthouses in the later centuries of the Republic, for Junius Brutus raised one of these constructions on Cape Finisterre in Spain, though we no longer know its exact name. Pericles had at a much earlier date set up lighthouses along Attica and in 280 Alexander erected on the isle of Pharos the monument which was celebrated throughout antiquity and was reproduced even on the coins. This tower, which lighted the approaches of the Delta, is said to have been 180 metres high and its light to have carried 150 miles. Its cost was estimated at more than £160,000.

In spite of all the improvements which were introduced—certain of which greatly changed the conditions of sea-borne commerce—and in spite of the more accurate knowledge of geography of which certain writers, among others Polybius, give proof, navigation was necessarily restricted by many precautions. There was hesitation in abandoning the coasts for the high sea and in continuing voyages during the night, although the method of setting the course by the stars was known. For four months of the year—from November to March—vessels remained in port. These facts are sufficient proof that navigation was subjected to a host of difficulties and even obstacles. Caesar thought to render it easier by setting on foot such far-reaching works as the protection of the coast by means of dykes near Ostia, the piercing of the isthmus of Corinth or the construction of a canal from Rome to Circeii, near Tarracina, which would have made it possible to avoid the dangerous places of the Tyrrhenian. He died, however, too early to realize his projects, which were in any case no more complex than those which had been executed by the Ptolemies of Egypt.

CHAPTER XVII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONETARY SYSTEM

THE monetary system of Rome necessarily developed along parallel lines to that of trade itself. The greater the volume of trade, the greater became the use of money and the more tendency there was to replace the heavy pieces of the early days by more handy and lighter coins expressing a high value in small compass. This logical transformation went on throughout the latter centuries of the Republic.

Copper money, which for nearly two hundred years was the only kind known and was hardly of a nature to facilitate dealings, had been in part superseded by silver in 269. During the period under consideration here it became progressively lighter and this diminution of weight was a sign of the times and an indication of the continued expansion of trade. The *as libralis* which at first contained 12 ounces and weighed 327 grams in 451, fell to 6, then 4, 3, and 2 ounces during the Punic wars. In 217, it was the equivalent of only one ounce of 27 grams, and in 89 (Lex Plautia Papiria) it fell to half an ounce. Furthermore, the baser coins had come to be used only as small change : even at Rome they were no longer struck, and the right to place them in circulation was from the time of Sulla reserved to the heads of the army.

Silver also underwent a series of transformations which at times closely resembled debasement. Although silver remained the standard, the weight of the *denarius*, which was taken as the unit coin, diminished. Instead of 4·55 grams, which was worth 11d. in 269, this unit in 217 only weighed 3·9 grams, and was worth 8½d. It was held as the equivalent of 16 asses, the quinarius corresponding to 8 asses, and the sesterce to 4 asses. Sulla established a fixed value, but the system did not last long. At the end of the third century the face values had been changed as the result of the working of the system itself.

Gold, which was to play a predominant part at the end of the Republic, when trade was increasing and the victorious generals were bringing in that most precious of metals by the ton, had first made its appearance at the time when Hannibal was sowing terror in the Peninsula. The consuls had minted in Campania coins which were doubtless imitated from those of Greece and were worth up to sixty sesterces. They bore on one side a head of Mars and an eagle and on the other the goddess Roma, and were marked LX, XL or XX, representing 60, 40, or 20 sesterces. Later, Pompey and Sulla renewed this experiment and Caesar finally regularized the use of gold by striking his *aureus* which weighed 8·48 gr. and was worth £1 2s. 7¼d. At that time Roman trade was in possession of all the coins indispensable to the easy transaction of business.

The Rome mint, of which we have already spoken, continued, as a matter of course, to exist: in 44, however, the III Viri who directed it became the IV Viri. The currency of the metropolis passed more and more into the annexed countries and into the towns which had received the *jus civitatis* and an attempt was made to accommodate to the Roman system those prevailing in the various provinces, in Illyria for example, but the East, which retained its own mints, at Tarsus and in other places, was exempted. Sulla closed the mint at Athens and Caesar that of Marseilles. Thus, before Actium, a degree of unity was realized which could not be other than profitable to trade.

CHAPTER XVIII

USURY AND DEBTS

DEALINGS in money seem to have followed the same lines of development as dealings in goods. We have seen that loans against interest and usury had made ravages during the period covered by the first part of this history : it would have been strange if the part they played had not become a still greater one in the second period, for on the one hand currency was pouring into the capital and, on the other, habits of luxury, borrowed from other countries, entered more and more into the life of the ruling class. But the desire for spending and display does not suffice in itself to explain the astonishing prosperity of all who took part in usurious transactions—whether private individuals or syndicates of publicans. As at the beginning of the Republic, the small landowners, when the owners of great estates threatened to crush them out of existence, endeavoured to obtain loans, and the debts which accumulated about their heads ended merely in hastening their descent into the proletariat through the gateway of expropriation. The question of debts was no less terrible in the century of Caesar than in that of Menenius Agrippa, and the abolition of the titles to repayment which the rich held over the poor formed part of the programme of all who wished to capture the popular vote. On many occasions, too, measures in addition to the agrarian laws were taken or promised by the magistrates or by the generals in an attempt to seek the backing of the plebeians against the possessing aristocratic class.

The legal and authorized rate of interest varied less between the years 264 and 30 than in the epoch immediately preceding. The Lex Genucia, passed in 231, certainly forbade, in principle, the collection of interest, but it was doubtless never applied. It seems to have been the normal practice to demand 1% per month, for interest was reckoned by the month and not by the year. For a long time nothing

was easier than to evade the provisions of the laws: the prohibition of usury applied only to Roman citizens, and the latter carried on their money-lending transactions through the medium of Latins, though in 193 this expedient became very difficult through the passing of a law requiring the Latins to declare debts in which they were interested through lending their name. But it was a long step from theory to practice. The Lex Gabinia might well, at the time of Cicero, forbid provincials to borrow in Rome; the financiers of the capital nevertheless held them pitilessly to ransom. The towns of Asia were in need of money and took little pains to protect themselves against their own imprudences: they were obliged to pay taxes and it was to cover the cost of their contributions that they increased their debts. What had become of the old Tables which, as Cato relates, condemned the thief to double and the usurer to a fourfold restoration?

In the Rome of the Civil Wars no shame was felt in lending money at exorbitant and fantastic rates of interest. 24% and even 48% did not seem excessive to the contemporaries of Cicero. The latter rate was that claimed by the publicans who in the course of fourteen years multiplied sixfold the total of their demands upon the cities of Asia Minor upon which Sulla had imposed war contributions. The same percentage was demanded of Cyprus by Brutus; it was what was claimed from Salamis by Scaptius, Brutus's man of straw, who sent a company of cavalry against the senate of the town to enforce payment. History relates that the senate was closely guarded, five of its members dying of hunger. It seems to have been accepted as a matter of course that the public forces should have been placed at the disposal of the usurers in order to facilitate the recovery of the debts owing them. We have the letters of Cicero, which were not regarded as compromising, in which the great orator begged the propraetor Thermus to bring pressure to bear on the populations of Miletus and Alabanda to pay what they owed to Cluvius. We can realize what was the influence of the creditors when we remember that amongst their number were Pompey (who received 33 talents interest monthly from King Ariobarzanes of Cappadocia) and Rabirius, the great financier of the king of Egypt.

All the measures directed against the traffickers in money

remained dead letters. The usurers fleeced princes and towns, and above all those of humble station, whom they forced to sell their land. The taxes imposed upon them at the beginning of the second century left them totally indifferent and only resulted in their pursuing their successful careers with renewed energy.

Many of them used the bankers or *argentarii* as intermediaries. The latter, although not comparable with the credit establishments which in our days control the money markets of the great states, played, nevertheless, an important part. Much more highly considered than the ordinary changers or *nummularii*, they received and paid out on behalf of third parties and sometimes opened current accounts against deposit. The letters of Cicero and the comedies of Plautus show that letters of exchange and cheques were already in use at that time.

But though the rich became increasingly richer through trading in money, the poor had fallen into an ever worsening state of destitution. A deep chasm opened between the two social categories, proprietors and expropriated. The abolitions of debts which were on several occasions ordered —they were in any case only partial—, for instance in 88 under Sulla and in 49 under Caesar, did not even attenuate the terrible burdens which pressed on the middle class. It is not surprising that the latter, whose normal state it was to be obliged to pay 24% and 48% interest, broke up to the point of almost complete disappearance and went to join the *plebs* in increasing numbers with each succeeding generation. This then—the swollen ranks of a miserable proletariat—was the result of conquest and tribute, of the trade in cereals, of the growth of slavery, the increase of currency, of unbridled usury ; in brief of all that characterized Roman activities at home and abroad during the last two centuries of the Republic.

PART THREE

THE EMPIRE

THE third period of this history covers 425 years, from the accession of Augustus to the death of Theodosius and the final partition of the whole Roman world between the West and the East. In the year 395, according to the order of ideas which finds general acceptance, the Middle Ages succeeded antiquity.

And in truth, from whatever point of view we may approach it, this third period is sharply differentiated from that which preceded it. In the political sphere the Empire succeeded the Republic. In the military sphere, Rome, instead of pursuing her penetration of the surrounding countries and making fresh annexations, was attacked by the barbarians, who established themselves on her soil. In the fiscal and administrative spheres, the old institutions, which reduced the machinery of government to a minimum, were replaced by an exaggerated centralization which multiplied infinitely the number of officials and their activities and taxes rose to an enormous extent—indeed to a point when they crushed every form of economic activity, discouraging both farmers and artisans. Finally, in the economic spheres, the tendency towards state intervention manifested itself under the most varying forms—to assure the life of the nation, to guarantee production and exchange, and to assign a definite public status, which was compulsory and hereditary, to all who followed a calling. No other society has ever offered the spectacle of such a "hierarchization", so generalized a system of functionaries, or such unlimited intervention as characterized the Roman Empire in its decline. It will fall to us to explain the enormous changes which came about—especially after the third century—in ideas, in institutions, in the circumstances of individuals and in the organization of labour.

There are those who only see in this period of history its most salient facts—the birth and extension of Christianity ; the unification of the known world under the yoke of Rome ; then the institution and the precarious maintenance of the *Pax Romana* and later the ever-renewed attacks by foreign races, Germans, Scythians, Sarmatians, Parthians and others, against a frontier which was less and less well-defended ; the foundation of a second capital, Constantinople, in the neighbourhood of the eastern boundary, the security of which was also increasingly threatened; the struggles of Praetorian against Praetorian, of emperor against emperor and of sect against sect ; the cruel acts of despotism and the persecutions which preceded the official conversion of the Empire to the new religion. But such persons have hardly reached the deeper workings of events—the succession of economic revolutions which explain the political, religious and even administrative development which took place.

Whatever difference there may be between this third period and the one which preceded it, whatever contrast may be revealed, no break in continuity appears. Institutions became transformed methodically and logically from the Civil Wars of the first century B.C. until the time of the first Caesars and from the first Caesars to Diocletian, Constantine and Theodosius. To understand their transformation, moreover, it is necessary to refer to the general conditions of labour during this long phase. As always, political facts and economic facts acted and reacted on one another. The Empire was to know more than two hundred years of prosperity and then to experience nearly two centuries of misery, of incessant crises, of agricultural decay, rural depopulation, industrial decline, and insecurity. Because the slave system was no longer able to furnish all the services which were traditionally expected of it, the emperors gradually substituted for slavery a new form of social relationship—the colony system. Because the food supply of the great cities was compromised by the collapse of the artisan class, the State in its turn took the initiative of organizing and regulating production by constituting privileged corporations. Because these privileged corporations exploited their quasi-monopoly — profiting

by the troubles of the times and the fluctuations of production to raise prices—the State intervened, fixing a maximum and thus interfering still more than before with the workings of the economic machine. It was probably in order to maintain a stronger hold on these corporations, whose claims grew as their services became more essential, that the emperors multiplied the number of official factories, which provided arms and equipment for the legions and probably other products as well.

However, the creation of corporate immunities and privileges, the opening of imperial factories, and at the same time the provision of a minimum of security and the feeding of the *plebs* of the two capitals entailed increasing expenditure. Enormous sums had to be found to pay the soldiery, to construct strongholds, to subsidize the barbarians who established themselves in the frontier districts—they were in any case a doubtful and fragile barrier against other barbarians—and to run the luxuriant and stifling bureaucracy which took root and flourished in all the provinces as though it were called upon to hold together the weakened fabric of the Empire. In this way the fundamental weakness of the regime came to light. Financial sacrifices and constraints were redoubled with the object of introducing a healthy economic system and ensuring the dominion of Rome. But the fiscal burden weighed so heavily upon the people as a whole that it imposed stagnation, and the constraints became so hated that nobody felt it in his interest to keep in existence so oppressive a system.

These few considerations may serve to assist us in recognizing the main lines of the development of labour during these 425 years. It may be summed up in a few words: the progress of industrial technique, the expansion of trade, the carrying out of great public works until the end of the Antonines, and thereafter a continual crisis in agriculture, industry and commerce, the exhaustion of the mines, deep class hostility, systematic debasement of the coinage, and a general rise of prices. The condition of the slaves improved whilst their numbers diminished and the free workers, invested with State functions, concentrated in their ranks the greater part of production: the colonists came to occupy a position between the slave and the free popula-

tions, partaking of the nature of the former in their attachment to the soil and of the latter in the matter of personal prerogatives. The social and economic systems at the end of the imperial epoch, seem infinitely more complex than at the end of the Republic. Nor is this surprising, for Rome and Constantinople had concentrated within their boundaries, the needs, the aspirations and the ideas of all countries fused in a single nation.

Rarely in history has humanity experienced a period of misery so continuous as that between the reigns of Caracalla, Macrinus and Elagabalus and the death of Theodosius. Rarely has such despair afflicted at one time millions and millions of men bowed under the yoke of boundless despotism and visited daily by some fresh terror —their earnings menaced by pitiless taxation, their work by internecine struggles and revolts and their lives by barbarian invasions. One must always bear in mind the innumerable perils which beset both the State and the individual in order to appreciate the real gravity of the crisis of the third and fourth centuries. And if we do not understand the full magnitude of this crisis we shall fail to comprehend the stupefying progress made by imperial absolutism, the rapid diffusion of Christianity, and the remarkable ease with which the tribes penetrated into the Balkan peninsula, northern Italy, Gaul, Spain, Asia Minor and as far as the southern portion of Egypt. It is here that the reaction and influence of economic factors are most clearly marked. The impoverished Roman world was helpless against the monarchs whom the legions acclaimed and unable to resist the increasingly heavy burdens which were placed upon it and which reduced its productive energy more and more. The door to Christianity was opened in lassitude and despair, as though the new doctrine possessed some virtue whereby material restoration might be achieved. It seemed, too, as though men wished to find in the mirages of the world beyond the grave a refuge from the sorrows and burdens of their material lives. And finally, this Roman world gave way before a barbarian attack, which was certainly not concerted though it was repeated simultaneously upon all the frontiers, because the crumbling empire no longer contained anything worth saving

and life had become so cruel a thing that no disorder, no violence and no subversion could add to its difficulties.

When the great, though still confused, economic disturbances brought down upon the Empire the unruly peoples who had been beating upon the gates, dreaming to enrich themselves by its spoils and to settle upon its soil, yet another economic crisis was ravaging the country, sapping its energy, breaking the basic unity which was its greatest guarantee, and reawakening into activity the factions which, whether as nations or as townships, had previously merged to form Rome's greatness. Fissures appeared, the Empire was rent and shattered by the blow, and history opened a new chapter. The one it closed depicts the impotence and the fragility of a rule which was founded upon military conquest and based upon contempt for human individuality, upon a complex social hierarchy and above all upon slavery. And, if there be one outstanding feature in this deplorable adventure we may seek it in the fact that the decline of the Empire coincided with the decline of servile labour. Slavery, stricken with sterility, dragged the Empire after it into catastrophe.

CHAPTER I

THE WARS ABROAD

THE Roman world added but little to its area during the first half of the Empire: it diminished during the second half, and but few provinces were added, in the years separating Augustus from Marcus Aurelius, to those acquired in the course of the last two centuries of the Republic. For, on the one hand, the territory of the Caesars was practically identical with the boundaries of the portion of the world known to the ancients and, on the other, Augustus, in a testament which was a model of wisdom and was for the most part respected by his successors, had counselled prudence and moderation. At a time when communications were slow and uncertain the administration of a vast body of nations entailed innumerable difficulties, the extent of which was perceived by the first emperors though they weighed far more heavily upon Aurelian, Diocletian and Theodosius at a time when the whole front was attacked by tribes in arms. The construction of Constantinople was in itself a reply to the ever-increasing anxieties which were inseparable from the defence of a frontier thousands of miles long.

It is known that Augustus caused to be drawn up an exact list of the Roman possessions: the work was executed by four geometers who were instructed to traverse the territory in all directions. By taking each about a quarter of the whole they accomplished their task, Zenodoxus in 13 years and 5 months, Theodotus in 19 years and 8 months, Polycletus in 24 years and 1 month and Dydymus in 16 years and 3 months. It has been calculated that, at the death of the conqueror of Antonius, the empire covered 3,340,000 sq. km., i.e. about six times the area of France. Of these, 2,231,000 were in Europe, 665,500 in Asia and 443,500 in Africa. Augustus, who had carried out campaigns on the Rhine against the Germans, and on both slopes of the Alps, created a continuous line of Roman territory from Italy to the

Hellenized portion of the Balkan Peninsula, annexing Rhaetia, Noricum, Pannonia and Moesia; he also annexed Galatia, Lycia and Pamphilia on Asiatic soil: he was one of the emperors who added most new countries to the existing territory.

Tiberius, who made war on the Rhine and in the East as far as the neighbourhood of the Euphrates, annexed the two Germanies, Upper and Lower, in the year 17, but was content to consolidate the results of previous invasions. In Asia, he annexed Cappadocia and Commagene. Claudius, who also fought the Germans, founded Cologne, occupied Britain as far as the Humber and converted the two Mauretanias—Caesariensis and Tingitana—and Thrace into provinces. Vespasian crushed the revolts of the Jews, the Britons and the Gauls, devoting himself to maintaining peace on the frontiers without attempting to increase his dominion. Domitian authorized Agricola to continue his advance in Britain as far as the Forth and the Clyde and founded a march, the Agri Decumates, in the valley of the Neckar.

Trajan is reckoned one of the most fortunate conquerors, for he annexed in Europe Dacia, which included the modern Hungary and Rumania (107), and in Asia Arabia, or rather the province which then bore that name and had Bostra as its capital (105), Armenia (114), Mesopotamia and Assyria (115). But he was himself the first to realize the vanity of the expedition which he conducted as far as the Persian Gulf.

Hadrian was chiefly concerned to maintain certain of Trajan's conquests: he abandoned Armenia, Assyria and Mesopotamia in order the better to defend the remainder. The Germans having grown increasingly threatening, he constructed from Coblenz to Regensburg a wall 300 miles long, and similar to the much shorter wall which he had erected in Britain. From his day, the emperors, assailed by hordes who rushed to the assault of the Roman world, were to make war permanently.

Marcus Aurelius fought against the Parthians, who had advanced as far as Syria; in Europe he resisted the first barbarian invasion after that of the Cimbri. Septimius Severus met the Parthians and the Caledonians at the opposite ends of the world as it was then known and Caracalla

repulsed the Alemanni in Germany and the Goths in Dacia. Under Alexander Severus (221–235), the Persian invasion was followed after a short lapse of time by a new Germanic onset.

From 235 to 395 incessant battle raged on all the extremities of the Roman world. Attacks were made by the Franks and the Alemanni in Gaul, Spain and Italy, by the Goths at Byzantium and in Asia Minor, by the Persians in Syria under Valerian and Gallienus (253–260), and by the Goths in Macedonia under Claudius II (268–270), who repulsed them with great bloodshed. Aurelian (270–275) abandoned Dacia, which seemed too remote to be worth defending, but he repulsed and captured Zenobia, the regent of Palmyra. On the death of that prince, the Germanic tribes fell upon Gaul, whence they were driven by Probus.

Diocletian also fought the Persians and the untiring and elusive Germans, whose menace became so strong that he was led to cover Gaul with forts. Constantine was continually on the move between the Rhine and the Danube enrolling barbarians—Goths, Vandals and Sarmatians—to reinforce his army in its struggles with other barbarians. Julian crushed the Alemanni who invaded the eastern portion of Gaul: he thrust them back to the Rhine and died later in Assyria (364) whilst pursuing the King of Persia. Valentinian I defeated the Alemanni and the Quadi whilst the Visigoths installed themselves by force in Thrace and in Moesia.

Thus, for more than 200 years the Empire was constrained to assume an onerous offensive. Far from dreaming of increasing her territory, Rome only succeeded with difficulty in preventing aggressors from the north and the east from coming too near her chief towns. A tremendous onrush of peoples from the heart of Germany, from Scythia, from the Lower Danube, and from the central plateau of Asia shook and dislocated her little by little until her walls were broken and her boundaries gradually reduced.

CHAPTER II

DOMESTIC DISTURBANCES

ALTHOUGH, until the time of the great barbarian invasions, the frontiers remained inviolate, domestic peace was rarely undisturbed. It was only to be more or less assured under Augustus and the Antonines. The flatterers of Antoninus Pius said in the middle of the second century, in the best years of his reign, that " the universe is making merry and the earth is an immense pleasure-garden " and an annalist found it possible to write that " all the provinces are prospering " without doing violence to the truth: but, throughout the four centuries which we are considering here, the princes to whom such homage could be rendered were indeed rare. Factors of disturbance and causes for anxiety multiplied incessantly from the middle of the reign of Marcus Aurelius, for work could not be carried on and trade could not develop in the prodigious turmoil of civil wars, devastations and persecutions which visited the Empire in the phase of terror that lasted until the final partition. The internecine struggles, the clash of arms, seditions and the pillaging of towns paralysed production and the economic crisis itself contributed with inevitable logic to turn the Roman world into a ready prey for all aggressors.

It is true that we can find as early as in the period immediately succeeding the death of Augustus most of the disruptive factors which we shall later enumerate, but the battles of the legions, who wished to acclaim their emperor, remained localized in certain districts so that even when blood was pouring in streams in one or more countries others, hundreds or even thousands of miles away, continued to enjoy the *Pax Romana.* In reality it was only on the day when barbarian invasions were added to Palace tragedies—from the year 167, to be precise—that breakdown and misery became universal.

In this study we can make but a brief and rapid examination of the various events which contributed to the final catastrophe.

The Praetorians had already exercised, from the days of Marius and Sulla, a deplorable influence: at the time of the struggles of Caesar and Pompey, and of Octavius and Antonius this influence did not cease to augment still more, to the detriment of Rome. The soldiers, who, though they did not yet lay claim to power, were the direct agents of the fortunes of the generals, made unheard-of claims, demanding without respite payment for fighting and expropriating the small cultivators in order to take their places. It was only with difficulty that Augustus repressed their brutalities, even when he had succeeded in re-affirming his power. Under his immediate successors the armies commenced to make and unmake emperors. By the use of force a given chief, more popular, more energetic or more generous, would seize the transitory dignity which the supreme office of state had become. Vitellius entered Rome with all the pomp that a victorious barbarian might have exhibited: he died in a battle under the ramparts of the city. Later, the groups of legions of the Rhine, the Danube and elsewhere became rivals of one another and put forward their respective candidates: thus there succeeded to the throne Spaniards, Gauls, Africans, Syrians and others. It was the uncontested reign of the soldiery. They constrained Nerva to adopt Trajan; they raised Septimius Severus to power and assassinated Alexander Severus and Aurelian.

This soldiery was costly. A single gift made by Septimius Severus to the Praetorians amounted to £4,000,000, and Alexander Severus—that most unfortunate victim of man's ingratitude—professed the axiom that the warrior should always have a full purse. When the legions were not tearing themselves to pieces in rivalry for power and for the exaltation of their chiefs and devastating the provinces around them, those provinces were laid under contribution to furnish their requirements.

Under such conditions the emperors who died natural deaths count as exceptions. The history of the sovereigns for more than four hundred years is but a series of assassi-

nations, of slaughter, poisoning and enforced suicides. Caligula fell under the blows of Chaerea, Claudius expired after eating a dish of mushrooms prepared by Locusta. Nero, Galba and Otho paid for their follies or their ambitions by a violent end. Titus was undoubtedly the victim of a cleverly arranged poison plot. Domitian was murdered in a palace revolt, Commodus was strangled, Caracalla, Macrinus, Elagabalus and Carinus did not escape a similar fate. How could such a succession of murders with its effect of continually renewing the holder of supreme power, bring about the state of security indispensable to the progress of agriculture and industry ?

The emperors perished by the sword or the dagger. But many of them, banishing all human sentiment, behaved as terrible despots. The absolutism, increasingly oriental and extreme, which grew on the ruins of the older institutions, unloosed its fury on all those persons of standing who, by their actions, their lives or their silence, seemed to offend the caprices or the follies of the monarch. Throughout many reigns, fresh proscriptions were imposed each day, informing became a profitable business whereby enormous fortunes were accumulated at the expense of the more honest citizens, blood flowed and every one trembled in his house, awaiting the order of exile or death. Tiberius, Nero, Caligula, Domitian and many others left behind them the memory of a tyranny which was destructive of energy and initiative and debasing to human nature.

To the civil wars and the organized carnage, which fell principally on the wealthy classes, who were those most directly concerned in the political strife, were added the invasions and persecutions which terrorized and decimated the small landed proprietors and the *plebs*. During the period of barbarian attacks, which followed one another from 167 to 395 breaking the bounds of the empire and nullifying the campaigns in Italy, Gaul, Macedonia, and Asia Minor, the fields were deserted and the inhabitants took shelter behind the walls of the towns, not daring to work or to sell, for at any moment their lives might be menaced by the sudden appearance of a horde of savages. The revolts, brought about by the awakening of " national " sentiments, like those of the Batavians, the Dacians, the Britons, or the Jews,

or at the instigation of ambitious men without other hope of attaining their ends, or again by the growth of distress, as at the time of the Bagaudae, assumed enormous importance in that demoralized and unresisting world.

Finally, Christianity brought with it the strongest factors of discord which the ancient world had ever known. The emperors held it at first in suspicion, because it preached equality and sapped their own authority; they then attempted to prevent its development by killing the new converts by thousands. They thereby put to death chiefly artisans and slaves and deprived the State and the community of the indispensable human material of industry. Until the end of the fourth century, the new religion, which progressed unceasingly, was to be the cause of profound dissentions, of unextinguishable hatred and of universal perturbation. The persecuted became persecutors until they were persecuted once again. The conflicts of the Christians and the Pagans, of the Orthodox with the Arians, continued under various forms and toleration never prevailed on either side. The general atmosphere of insecurity led the people to Christianity and Christianity in its turn added to the insecurity.

Marcus Aurelius, Septimius Severus, Diocletian and Aurelian combated the Christians. The edict of Milan, published by Constantine in 313, was but a passing calm in the interminable storm. Constantius, an Arian, tortured the orthodox; Julian, a neo-Pagan, punished all those who refused to accept his ideal: in this way, to the economic crisis which weighed upon the whole Empire, to the permanent threat suspended over the open frontiers and to the exactions of the Praetorians there was added, in order to aggravate yet further the desolation of Italy and of the provinces, the conflict of creeds and the clash of sects. What accumulations of distress!

The famed and fruitful unity, which was realized during the first part of this period and which brought together into a harmonious whole the most differing peoples by stimulating the exchange of commodities, broke down at the middle of the third century. Valerian and Gallienus took, the one the West, and the other the East, then there arose transient monarchs—ten and more at a time—who ruled

nations or small districts. Aurelian restored united rule and Constantine re-established it once again after Diocletian had organized the Tetrarchy, but Valentinian and Valens reigned jointly after 364 and Theodosius, who brought together the western and eastern worlds for the last time under his sceptre, accepted the final partition before he died.

Such is the stage on which we are to see the development of life and work from the year 30 B.C. until 395 A.D. We have already learned that two centuries of robust prosperity were followed by two of extreme distress.

CHAPTER III

THE POPULATION

THE figures which historians and economists put forward as representing the population of the Empire vary greatly, but how can we be surprised by the considerable and sometimes enormous differences between their calculations when we reflect that they are based on pure conjecture ? We find nowhere definite particulars which would authorize precise and unchallengeable conclusions.

Beloch considers that at the death of Augustus the Roman world comprised 54 million inhabitants, the monarch in question having himself added several millions to the previous numbers by the annexation of Noricum, Pannonia, Moesia, etc. But the same writer is too prudent to produce a general balance-sheet for the centuries which followed. He is content to tell us that Egypt is thought to have had eight million inhabitants and Africa five million at the end of Roman history : he also claims that Italy had increased her quota of free citizens from 3,250,000 at the time of Augustus to 6,000,000 at the time of Claudius, in less than half a century. Such an increase, in spite of the power of attraction exercised by the Peninsula over the Greeks, Spaniards and Orientals, seems very much exaggerated. Wietersheim would give the Empire 91 and Gibbon as many as 120 million inhabitants. There is nothing to lead us to prefer one assertion to another.

Nevertheless, the statements left on record by the annalists, historians and poets go to shew that two movements of population, in opposite directions, took place successively throughout the Empire. We see, too, that childless families and celibacy became more and more common towards the end—and these are phenomena of value to the student of the economic development of Rome. They are in some respects the symptoms and in other the causes of the changes which came about.

The rural exodus which we noted in the last phase of the Republic continued on an increasing scale for very many years. The factors which contributed to bring about this desertion of the countryside were the excesses of the veterans, the civil wars, the attractions of the capital, in which the tendency was towards the provision of free food, the expansion of the *latifundia* which ruined the small property-owners, and the substitution of oil-production, vine-growing, bird-raising and pasture for the growing of cereals. All these factors remained in existence and grew increasingly strong. After having operated throughout Italy (of this, Virgil and Columella have given irrefutable proofs and Seneca shews us that Lucania and other districts were practically empty of peasantry) these causes of depopulation exercised their influence around the whole frontier of the Empire. The distress of Greece, where entire districts had become marshes and ruins, has been portrayed by all the ancient writers and Plutarch tells us that her inhabitants had fallen to such a small number that she could not muster 3,000 soldiers. Later, the fertile plains of Asia Minor, in spite of their far-famed riches, lost a part of the farmers who had exploited them but had left for the cities in search of a less arduous livelihood.

Until the end of the Antonines and even until after the time of Aurelian, the population of the towns increased incessantly. I do not speak only of Rome, which even 300 years after the death of Augustus was far greater than any other capital of the known world and whose premier position the foundation of Constantinople was alone able to threaten. But in all the provinces, the cities, old or new, became centres of attraction and enclosed myriads of immigrants within their walls. Some authorities, like Lipsius, estimate the population of Rome at 4,000,000; others, like Vossius, as high as 14,000,000: Gibbon is content with 1,200,000 and Beloch with 800,000 for the districts comprised within the walls of Aurelian. Alexandria, before the sack of 297 which quenched the revolt of Achilleus, had a girth of 13 miles and contained from 500,000 to 800,000 inhabitants. Jerusalem is said to have sheltered as many as 600,000 Jews. In Asia, Apamea, Caesarea, Cyzicus, Trapezus, Tyre and Sidon, with their houses of eight storeys, and in

Gaul, Lyons, Arles, Narbonne and Trier were centres of considerable size which increased as the result of the rural influx. The phenomenon of urban concentration, which is to-day manifest in the two hemispheres, affirmed itself until the third century in the Roman world.

Let us now consider the movement in the other direction.

In the fourth century, the towns in their turn lost population to the profit of the countryside. Whilst, on the one hand, celibacy became almost an institution in spite of the laws promulgated against it from the time of Augustus and found a new support through the development of Christian ideals, on the other, the artisans began to leave the avocations to which they were officially tied. They left the provincial chief towns where they were molested by the administration, overtaxed, and subjected to ever-increasing compulsion in various forms. The desertion became general and penetrated even into the ranks of the well-to-do. The interference exercised by the government was so continual and so irritating that people elected, in order to escape it, to leave a holding which was in any case always precarious or a profession which grew ever more onerous : thus industry declined and trade became less in the towns, upon which there also fell at lessening intervals hordes of barbarians in quest of food and pleasures. It was in vain that the emperors threatened and even punished the fugitives or, like Valens and Valentinian I, tracked down workmen who had broken their contracts, enforcing penalties for those who received them. The people moved on to the land where they thought that they would be happier as colonists or serfs of the glebe. This return to the land coincided, however, with a general restriction of the population. We are unfortunately without statistics for the period between Constantine and Theodosius : it is, however, probable, if the evidence of the writers of the day is true, that the Roman world then shewed a density below, on the average, that of the Antonine period or even that of the beginnings of the Empire, and a history of a nation at work must not fail to emphasize the fact.

CHAPTER IV

THE IMPERIAL INSTITUTIONS

THIS is not the place for a profound and circumstantial study of the development of the political and administrative systems in the course of the centuries between Actium and the death of Theodosius. Nor can it be expected that we should give a detailed account of the relations of the senatorial and the equestrian orders which, in the second and first centuries B.C., were engaged in bitter warfare with one another. It must suffice here to describe in a few words the imperial institutions, their gradual transformation, and the influence which the latter exercised on the conditions of life and work. The class conflicts became much less sharp in this phase, when oriental absolutism was tending to bend all social categories to its will and to find places in a complicated social order for the millions of men who were all equally deprived of liberty.

At first the emperor incorporated in his person all the dignities of the Republic, allowing their titles and attributes to subsist, later he came to be regarded in the light of an emanation of divine power, and from the third century his attitude and prerogatives resembled those of the Asiatic rulers. He surrounded himself with *equites* whose fortunes he augmented disproportionately to their deserts, with freedmen who thanks to his favour accumulated hundreds of thousands of pounds and also with persons of senatorial rank, but his council was composed entirely of men of his own choosing. It was a series of continuous but—if considered individually—comparatively minor changes which led the Roman world from the imperial dignity of Augustus or Vespasian to the *de jure* and *de facto* despotism of such men as Diocletian and Constantine.

At the same time as this enormous authority was being concentrated in the hands of one man, who was after all only the candidate elected by the Praetorians, who went at all times in peril of his life and who was rarely able to

designate his successor—in sum a terrible, omnipotent and withal fragile monarch—, bureaucratic centralization was growing incessantly. It was rampant in the services, whether those of tax-collection, of justice or of the control of public works. Even when there were two capitals the system became more accentuated, each of the capitals dominating the more easily the immense district which fell within its competence. The Republic had as far as possible reduced its interference in the provinces, leaving an almost unlimited initiative to the magistrates which it dispatched there: rather than be encumbered with an army of tax-collectors it had transferred the business of taxation to the syndicates of publicans. Under the Empire, everything derived from Rome and found its way to Rome. It was from the Palace that the decisions were promulgated which determined the administration of the remotest districts and "procuratores", generally chosen from the ranks of the *equites*, were given authority to receive the direct taxes in the name of the sovereign; they were richly rewarded for their services, some of them being in receipt of salaries as high as 400,000 sesterces per annum.

In order the better to establish this centralization, the princes divided the provinces into sections so that the administrators controlled only relatively limited areas. The number of such divisions, which at the end of the Republic was 14 and at the accession of Hadrian was 45, rose to 57 at the beginning of the reign of Diocletian and to 96 at his death. Further, between the Empire as a unit and the provinces there were the dioceses to the number of 12—the Eastern (which included Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia), those of Pontus, Asia (western portion of Asia Minor and the isles of the Archipelago), Thrace, Moesia, Pannonia, Italy, Africa, Spain, Viennensis, Gaul and Britain. An enormous army of bureaucrats of all kinds, infinitely subdivided, exercised their often intolerable exactions and their vexatious authority from one extremity to the other of the known world, their essential function being to bring into Rome resources which never appeared sufficient, to squeeze agriculture, industry and commerce for the benefit of a treasury which seemed to be always empty. The machinery of the empire proved terribly costly after the

end of the second century. Its demands increased to an insane extent at the very moment when the great economic crisis made its appearance and helped to aggravate it.

Court expenditure grew more and more wanton after the time of Diocletian, when the oriental style came into use with its huge lists of palace officials, with the pomp of processions and solemnities and with the accumulation of useless domestic servants. Rome, Constantinople, Sirmium, Nicomedia, Milan, Lutetia (Paris) and Augusta Trevirorum (Trier) in turn were residences of the sovereigns who installed themselves in each with a separate personal staff.

The military machine at the end of this period attained unprecedented dimensions, for on the one hand the emperors endeavoured to increase their power by adding to the number of their faithful Praetorians and on the other the barbarian attacks were renewed at so many points of the frontier that a chain of armed men had to be kept in perpetual readiness along a line thousands of miles long. At the end of the Republic the State maintained only 13 legions: Diocletian possessed 67, recruited both among the peoples of the provinces and among the barbarians who joined *en masse*. Not only did the numbers increase without abatement but the pay was raised on several occasions and Caracalla alone added £2,800,000 to this item of expenditure.

The gifts which the monarchs were continually obliged to make to the people of the large towns in order to obtain their favours and to dissipate the discontent which was coming into existence also represented an appreciable total. Septimius Severus spent £6,800,000 in this way—and it must be borne in mind that these gifts only affected a small part of the inhabitants of the Empire.

It was, however, the bureaucracy above all which ruined the treasury: scribes of all sorts and conditions swarmed in the centre and in the remoter parts, complicating with their useless forms and their red tape an administration which was in itself already complex enough, penetrating into every detail of economic life and spreading over the towns and the countryside a network of controls, of informers, and of oppressions—a framework which instead of supporting this vast body of nations, crushed it with its whole weight. It became possible to write that "those who live at the

expense of the public funds are more numerous than those who provide them ". The officialdom of modern communities seems slight and modest by the side of that of the fourth century, which dealt with the minutest details and endeavoured to attract to itself the last vestiges of energy in that declining world.

We are therefore not surprised to find that in their anxiety to meet ever-increasing expenditure the emperors devoted their ingenuity to creating fresh resources. For more than 200 years their main concern was to tap fresh revenue and impose taxes which would bring in greater returns without, however, arousing the anger of the taxpayers—an insoluble problem. It was in vain that Caracalla extended civic rights in order to unify at the same time the fiscal system and in vain that others, like Diocletian, revived the survey register of Augustus in order to increase the land tax. The method of collecting the land tax was changed; the dues on the sale of slaves, the death duties and the taxes levied on imports and exports varied from age to age; the *chrysargyron* fell heavily upon industry and commerce; *aurum coronarium* was demanded of the members of the senates of the towns, but there was a limit to the powers of the taxpayer and, as the bureaucracy began to ask too much, they ceased to pay. They cried so loudly towards 364 that the emperor Valentinian gave the towns a special protector, the Defender of the City, whose duty it was to keep the exactions of the agents of the treasury within limits. A strange notion—yet one which well characterizes the distress of the time, for the fiscal authorities seemed to be above the State.

The *curiales*, who were compelled jointly and severally to pay the taxes imposed upon them, endeavoured to flee but were held back by force. The artisans, crushed by the *chrysargyron*, endeavoured to leave their trades and to escape to the country where they hoped to lead a less precarious existence: they were bound down to their tasks. In order to stop the decay which was everywhere manifest, and to keep life in the failing body of the Empire, the monarchs evolved the plan of making everybody a functionary. Everyone had his allotted task, from which he could not withdraw. Everyone was assigned a legal

obligation and a social duty which he was not allowed to refuse. The Roman world, in its last years, was no more than a vast construction of innumerable watertight compartments where every human being, deprived of the most elementary liberties, was obliged to restrict his activities to his own compartment and to die in it. Forced labour, to which there corresponded immunities, privileges and subsidies of varying extent according to class, was the supreme characteristic of this system which was breaking down under the double attack of widespread distress and universal lassitude.

CHAPTER V

LUXURY

AS in all decadent communities, luxury reached an unexampled degree of senseless prodigality in the imperial Roman world. However great the distress among the masses, there was always to be found a select oligarchy upon whom the monarch's favours were lavishly bestowed. Deriving its wealth more often by direct spoliation than by the lawful exploitation of the soil or the mines, and accumulating huge fortunes, this plutocracy, which was made or unmade by the caprice of a single individual, gave full rein to its extravagance. In order to understand the increasing attraction which Rome offered until the last to the oriental countries whose millions she yearly swallowed up, one must remember the unwholesome love of display and the Asiatic passion for very rare objects which characterized the official aristocracy—a curious spectacle which was already offered us at the end of the Republic.

Some of the emperors owned immense wealth in their private names: this is not surprising since they arrogated to themselves the right to confiscate everything. Augustus himself, who had inherited nearly £40,000,000 in twenty years, bequeathed £400,000 to the people and £1,400,000 to his heirs; but the heads of the State were not the only gainers by the accumulations of wealth which had become more and more marked during the first and second centuries; many senators owned property in every province and had incomes of over a hundred thousand pounds, keeping thousands of slaves. Pliny was already relegating to the second rank those whose annual receipts did not exceed £60,000. Moreover the treasury was available to subsidize retired officials of high rank who complained of the hard days upon which they had fallen. It was, however, chiefly the freedmen who, by exploiting the weaknesses, fears and vices of the monarchs, amassed scandalous riches. Pallas, under Claudius, possessed £3,200,000 and, under

Nero, Narcissus had more than £4,000,000, Men of infamous character, like Callistus and Epaphroditus, could rival them; others followed and during the ensuing centuries, till the reign of Theodosius, there was always the opulence of a few parvenus to contrast with the cruel destitution of the masses of the citizens.

As for the emperors and their favourites, they strove to astound the world by their fantastic follies. Luxury in food, in attire and in furniture surpassed every example of sumptuous idiocy which our own epoch can show. Suetonius delighted to enumerate the insensate eccentricities of the Caesars and the later writers have added to the already abundant evidence which he has left us. Caligula drank precious stones dissolved in vinegar and served his guests with gilded bread and meat. He had galleys built with ten rows of oars, the poops studded with gems and the cabins prodigiously elaborate. His cloaks were adorned with emeralds, his robes were woven of pure silk and he bridled his horses with halters decorated with shining carbuncles.

In order to dazzle Asia, Nero granted king Tiridates a daily pension of £8,000. He played dice for £4,000 a point. When, after the great fire of A.D. 64, he caused a golden palace to be erected, he exclaimed: "At last I am going to be housed like a human being!" Vitellius obliged one of his friends to prepare a meal for him which cost £4,000, at which 2,000 fishes and 7,000 birds were consumed. He sent ships to Gades and messengers as far as Parthia to discover rare viands. Domitian had an artificial lake constructed in order to stage a naval battle. Later still, Elagabalus seems to have attempted to put the most prodigal of his predecessors' exploits completely in the background.

How could the emperors who afforded such sorry examples enforce respect for the sumptuary laws? Prohibition succeeded prohibition without effect. Senators and freedmen lavished money on their households, their villas and their furniture, paying as much as £40,000 for a single carpet and striving after rare materials. Ammianus Marcellinus describes the wave of magnificence which swept over the upper classes in the fourth century, when invasion was threatening from every side. Never was so much attention

given to attire. More fastidious in their toilet than their own wives, the great officials were clad in cloaks of loosely woven material, ornamented with fringes, and tunics on which were embroidered the figures of animals. Having armies of servants at their orders, they gave interminable feasts, whilst millions of hungry men were wandering through the streets and over the fields. Their barbarous pomp was in hideous contrast with the miseries of the social system.

CHAPTER VI

THE CAPITALS

THE contrast in conditions was particularly marked in the capitals. For more than three centuries, Rome remained the sole centre, the official capital, and the economic market; then the sovereigns, wishing to maintain a closer watch upon invasions, established themselves nearer the frontiers, and in 330 Constantinople became the second great centre of activity. This division of the territory was in no way factitious and was only partly dictated by military considerations. It corresponded to a natural cleavage between the eastern and western worlds which had been more or less maintained by history, creeds and customs. The old Greek and Asiatic traditions had survived in spite of apparent Romanization throughout vast regions of the Empire. Though the West had powerfully influenced the East, the East had reacted no less strongly upon the West: the latter had imposed upon the former its actual domination but had in turn borrowed traditions of government, habits of life, creeds and forms of worship. The setting up of an administration in Constantinople was a recognition of this return of oriental vitality and influence.

It must be repeated that these capitals, from whatever aspect they may be regarded, enjoyed an ascendancy which none of our modern great cities commands and the institutions with which they were endowed, enabling thousands to live almost for nothing, were always tending to increase their congestion.

It is impossible to ascertain what was the exact population of Rome: it may have been 800,000, 1,200,000, 1,900,000, 4,000,000 or even more, for all have given full rein to their imagination on this point. What, however, is certain is that the wall of Aurelian was ten miles in circumference and that in the fourth century the metropolis exceeded that enceinte at all points and spread into the surrounding country. Statistics of the time of Constantine estimated

the number of houses at 48,400. But how many inhabitants were there to a house ?

The emperors continually added to the amenities of the city, the most economical and the most prodigal alike trying to leave upon it some mark of their rule.

Augustus, who reorganized the already very complicated city government—with its food supply, fire, police and water-supply departments—, could say : " I found a capital of brick and left one of marble ". He instituted the market known as the *Macellum Liviae* ; Nero, after the fire of 64, rebuilt the city whilst maintaining fantastic magnificence in his Golden House. Earlier, he had laid out on the Coelian the *Macellum Magnum* or Great Market. To Vespasian we owe the Forum Pacis and the Colosseum built on the site of the Golden House. Domitian—amidst the plaudits of the aesthetes and the poets—ordered the demolition of the booths which obstructed the streets. The traffic had at that time become more congested than ever in all the populous quarters and each trade was strictly confined to its own small area : the goldsmiths, silversmiths and jewellers were in the Via Sacra, the furniture dealers in the court of the Septa, the perfume and silk merchants in the Forum of Peace. Despite imperial enactments, the height of the houses was continually increasing and Trajan found it necessary to restrict it to 63 ft. This emperor also made alterations to the forum which bears his name, Caracalla built baths, which were later surpassed in size by those of Diocletian, and Septimius Severus the enormous palace on the Palatine. From the first to the fourth century, edifices sprang up one after another in a comparatively restricted space, completely changing the general appearance of the city and, above all, augmenting the facilities for commerce.

The food supply service, which was set up in the last period of the Republic and to which the term " legal " seems very properly to have been applied, acquired especial importance under the Empire. The *plebs*, who swarmed in the suburbs, were a perpetual menace to absolute government if they were not fed. The sovereigns strove to satisfy them, to ensure that the provinces should always provide the food required for the subsistence of the enormous

BLOCKS OF HOUSES AT OSTIA.

A single line of rooms looking on to the street, with stairs to the floor above.

(By kind permission of the Council of The Roman Society.)

[*face p.* 238.

metropolitan population and to increase the food doles in each succeeding age. In the end, in order the better to guarantee the regularity of the system, they had recourse to the medium of the compulsory and privileged corporations and it even seems that the necessities of the food-dole system were among the chief factors in the transformation of those bodies. Despotism, to all appearances firmly established, would have crumbled in face of a mob clamouring in vain for bread. The whole economic and social structure would have cracked and split to its foundation had the food distributions ceased. How weak it really was, we may discern from the effects of the great famines which, even in the first century, gave rise to formidable insurrections.

Corn was the chief element in the food distributions. Augustus gave it to 200,000 people, after which this total rose, fell and rose again, varying between 180,000 and 320,000. In the time of Septimius Severus, Rome consumed nearly 28 million bushels and the treasury spent the equivalent of £480,000 annually. That emperor boasted of having seven years' supply in his granaries and made the oil grant general; Elagabalus reduced this but Alexander Severus again increased it. Bread of poor quality took the place of corn in the Aurelian period and in 367 Valentinian ordered that this bread should be of the best quality. In the fourth century, the emperors caused quarters of meat to be given to the paupers whose names were entered on the registers of the *annona*, besides the special subsidies which also included food of all kinds. It has been estimated that from the time of Caesar to that of Diocletian, £120,000,000 was spent on corn and bread alone. This estimate is, however, purely conjectural. To this must be added the cost of oil, meat, public games, etc., as well as that of administration—at first *curatores* and then a prefect with a whole bureaucracy—which was attached to the service of the *annona*.

All went well and that part of the population which depended upon the treasury for its sustenance remained comparatively quiet so long as the distribution of food took place regularly, but the periods of scarcity—inevitable at a time when agriculture was but indifferently developed and communications were slow—evoked terrible turmoil. Historians mention the famines of the years 6, 8, 19, 41

and 52, which were attended by bloody mutinies, and of 67, 108, 166 and 188; and the sternest of the emperors did not escape the demonstrations of the infuriated *plebs*.

Constantinople, which was founded in 330 on the site of Byzantium, in an admirable and unique situation, rose very rapidly to the rank of leading city.

Constantine, in order to stimulate its growth, was not content to spend vast sums, no doubt far in excess of the £4,800,000 recorded by the historians. In order to produce a real town within the five-league ambit which he had described, he had recourse to every kind of arbitrary measure; he prohibited for example any landowner in Asia or the Pontus from making a will unless he had built a house in his new capital. He endowed it moreover with all the institutions which had been created in Rome, including among others the distribution of corn and oil, guaranteeing the inhabitants 80,000 measures of free grain daily. In order to assure the food supply, he did not hesitate to drain the resources of the neighbouring country, from which the peasants preferred to emigrate, and to impose upon Egypt a crushing tribute in corn. Nevertheless, at the end of the fourth century, Constantinople, in spite of its artificial creation, had become a huge centre which dominated the trade of the East and had deprived Rome of the influence which she had hitherto exercised upon the industry and commerce of the Hellenic and Asiatic provinces. The economic system of the old Empire was thereby overthrown.

CHAPTER VII

THE DECLINE OF SLAVERY

SLAVERY remained until the end of Roman history one of the bases of the economic system : upon it to a great extent agricultural and industrial production rested, as also the working of a certain number of public services, but the part which it played steadily decreased. Neither the Stoics nor the Christians can be credited with bringing about this decay of a predominant and fundamental institution, for whatever sympathetic words the writers of either doctrine may have found for the captives, they never fought the principles of the system which had endured for centuries and never insisted on complete respect for the physical person. The law, the customs and the moral ideas of the time condemned neither the ownership nor the sale of individuals. In this respect no development was to take place in the last centuries of the Empire and though certain regulations were passed to prohibit the violences which were traditionally exercised on the *servi* they were inspired mainly by self-interest and responded above all to the desire to safeguard a necessary economic factor, the maintenance of which seemed to be more and more compromised.

There was a crisis in the economic aspect of the slave question from the time of the Antonines ; it was due in the first place to the fact that captures were becoming fewer. The great wars, which had supplied the markets of Rome, Corinth, and Delos at the end of the Republic, had ceased practically everywhere. The historians no longer, as in the past, recorded the statistics of the captures made from the barbarians, whereby the stocks of human cattle were periodically renewed. At the same time, technical progress, of which the unskilled servile population was unable to make use, restored to the *liberi*, who were organized in a social scale according to their duties, some of the trades from which they had gradually been eliminated. Certain

disadvantages of the regime hitherto practised were recognized and, in agriculture, the colony system, which had established itself fairly early at Rome and was the general rule among the barbarians, shewed signs of being far more fruitful: it had the advantage of assuring to the owner of the land both greater production and minimum working expenses. Thus, although it was far from disappearing, slavery simultaneously found its numerical importance and its economic influence lessened. Because the numbers of slaves grew fewer and because the attempt was made to revive the system in order the better to associate it with the artisan class which had been reconstituted in privileged associations and with the increasingly widespread colonies, the condition of the *servus* tended to improve. The emperors believed that by their edicts and regulations of all kinds they could put a stop to a transformation of which they were afraid and the full scope of which they failed to grasp. The more intelligent owners feared to lose the interest from the capital which the rural and urban "families" represented and made efforts to reduce their rigour in order to obtain more and better work.

It would not, however, be just to conclude from these cursory considerations that the fate of the slave had become enviable or to suppose that the part he played was so much reduced as to be negligible: on the latter point above all, illusions must be banished.

However thorough the extension of the colony system, however widespread the renaissance of the corporate artisan class under the emperors of the third and fourth centuries, however valuable the results which may have been given, at least temporarily, by the system of compulsory public functions which had been grafted on industry and commerce, a system which had been so much alive as that of slavery and which had so many roots in the whole organization of the societies of antiquity could not perish at one blow. The development was slow, and to contemporaries almost imperceptible. The colony system established itself in the place of the servile system by a transition process which was to some extent unnoticeable. When the workshops of private individuals felt the competition of the free workers—if one may thus refer to the workers who had

a civic capacity—the slaves were already concentrated by thousands in the large imperial factories which had arisen in all parts of Roman territory to supplement the reduced output or to fight the selfish tendencies of private industry.

The history of labour under the Empire thus presents neither surprises nor abrupt turns. We find already in action the tendencies which were to develop at the beginning of the Middle Ages and we still find the factors of production which had been at work under the Republic : the organization of labour appears, however, more complex than in the two first centuries B.C. because it offers, side by side, the new and the old forms and also those forms which seemed dead but were revived with a passing show of energy.

The number of slaves fell gradually from the time of the Antonines until that of Theodosius. We learn that 40,000 Salassi were carried off by Augustus and that Titus put 90,000 Jews in chains, but the great convoys of prisoners, to the sight of which Marius, Sulla and above all Caesar had accustomed Rome, ceased to arrive. On the one hand, the sources from which the slave population was recruited were drying up and on the other their numbers were reduced by an excessive mortality which was no longer compensated by the constant arrival of new captives. It was in vain that the owners endeavoured to encourage prolific unions, the number of births did not increase. The various legal causes of enslavement furnished but little result. The number of persons condemned to death or to hard labour, *servi poenae*, who were sent to the mines was necessarily insufficient to fill the gaps. Neither the revocation of manumissions on the ground of ingratitude nor the enactments of the *senatus consultum* of Claudius in the year 52 against women of free condition who entered into relations with a slave without the authorization of his master were capable of bringing about a noticeable increase in numbers. It is true that attempts were made, as we shall see later, to restrict the manumissions, but the results of the prohibitions and restrictions were meagre. Piracy, which, as in the first century B.C., had kept the markets supplied, had been suppressed during the happy and transitory period of the *Pax Romana* and there was hardly

any thought of the resumption of the old trade. At the beginning of the third century and even earlier it became evident that there was no remedy for the diminution of the slave stock and prices tended to rise.

Here, as everywhere else, there is a lamentable lack of information. Columella reports that a vine-dresser skilled at his task was at that time worth a sum which reduced to terms of modern currency would have been equivalent to £80; his annual upkeep would cost £24. At the time of Trajan, as much as £100 was frequently paid, and this is also the figure often cited by the juriconsults in the examples which they give. I intentionally refrain from mentioning the exceptional sums which were offered for captives of both sexes when they possessed unusual talents or surprising beauty. It no longer happened that, as at the end of the Republic, thousands of prisoners were disposed of at the lowest prices, for the demand—especially after the Antonines—was greatly in excess of the supply.

The duties assigned to the slaves did not differ from those which they had performed at earlier dates. They were scattered through all the professions; the rich exhibited their vanity more than ever by surrounding themselves with costly suites which contained their whole personal staff, and by offering to the eyes of their guests the spectacle of a complete "urban family". The "rural family", little changed, retained the characteristics which it had adopted after the second century, but became somewhat rarer when the colony system entered into its great phase of expansion. The workshops which Crassus and his imitators had set up continued at first in existence but in the second period of the Empire were frequently superseded by the State factories which employed thousands of hands, recruited for the greater part among the slave population. Here also, development was slow and the results were not seen in practice until the time of Diocletian: but the slave element had only changed hands and passed to a new master, and the use which was made of its strength and physical skill was still the same.

The rule of the Caesars was characterized above all by the employment of slaves in the public offices. This employment, which had been practised from all antiquity and had

developed after the beginning of the Civil Wars, became general under the successors of Marcus Aurelius. The *servi publici* then formed compact groups which were allotted to the various services. Some were torturers, others were enrolled among the firemen in the capital. They were drafted in large contingents into the administration of the water-supply—an essentially important service—into the roads department and the accounting offices, where the mental dexterity of certain of them was highly prized, and into the detachments used to guard and maintain public buildings. Though there was on the whole a general tendency towards decrease on the part of the servile population, it was above all in the houses of private citizens and in agricultural and industrial undertakings that the decrease was most marked—it grew, and rapidly, in so far as it was connected with the enterprises of the State.

Legal documents regarding the conditions reserved for the servile population are not lacking; indeed, sources become ever more abundant as we leave behind the date of the beginning of the Empire. We will endeavour to define somewhat more closely the influence which pagan philosophy on the one hand and Christianity on the other exercised over the fate of millions of men kept in captivity and compelled to toil.

Slavery never ceased to be, according to a clear and conclusive formula, "an institution of the law of nations under which, contrary to nature, a person remained subject to another person". It is certain that on the main principle of the institution upon its legitimacy and its necessity Stoics and Christians were in complete harmony.

Such attenuations in the treatment of the slaves as the laws and constitutions granted were dictated by economic much more than by humanitarian considerations. Their object was to assure the preservation of an important piece of machinery which self-interest demanded should not be allowed to rust. From the first century this concern had existed and the emperors placed successive restrictions upon the *potestas* of the master who might be tempted to abuse his rights to the greater prejudice of the State and of production generally. The Lex Petronia stipulated that nobody might without due cause oblige his slave to fight

with wild beasts. The edict of Claudius provided that any slave who had been abandoned on account of infirmity should *ipso facto* regain his liberty, and that any owner who should kill an incurable slave should be prosecuted for homicide. This same point appealed to other emperors also—in particular to Antoninus whose enactments supplemented and narrowed down those of the Claudian edict. Nero had already appointed a special magistrate to receive appeals by slaves. Later, regulations became still more numerous because the masters, faced by the competition of the corporations, reduced the cost of their staff to a minimum and often increased their exactions and their violences in order to stimulate the activity of their slaves. Hadrian sentenced to heavy penalties those who illtreated their *servi* and one of his successors forbade their being constrained to perform degrading tasks. And this trend of ideas, which gradually became more widespread and which the writers, both poets and philosophers—Juvenal and Seneca among many others—contributed to spread, found expression in still more far-reaching transformations of the law. The slave was no longer afraid for his savings. He was able to bequeath, he acquired a semi-personality and Caracalla later declared that a child begotten in servitude and born in liberty was of free condition.

We must not, however, exaggerate and believe that the harsh and barbarian conceptions of antiquity had been permeated by the spirit of clemency or benevolence. The slave remained a chattel, like a horse or an ox, and unless some legal procedure intervened to change his condition he committed a crime if he attempted to escape from captivity. In this regard there was never any hesitation or alleviation. A Constitution of Diocletian and Maximin forbade the fugitive slave to invoke *usucapio*, or acquisition of ownership by continuous possession, so that the regulations applying to the possession of property were not applied to him and it was thus more easy for a farmer to acquire by use the property of another than for a servile worker to free himself of his chains. The expression is not too strong, for, although they had been suppressed in theory by Hadrian, the *ergastula* existed in practice and, had they not existed, supervision would probably have been impossible. Diocletian

and Maximin also drew attention to the right of a master to institute searches for slaves who had taken to flight. Constantine, although a Christian, added that a slave asking shelter of Barbarians should have a foot amputated or be relegated to the mines ; he gave formal orders for the beating of the slaves belonging to the public services should they attempt to leave the town. A constitution passed a little later imposed fines upon persons sheltering such slaves. When we place side by side these official documents and those already quoted, which forbade brutality, the trend of thought of the time stands out clearly. The Empire did not wish to abandon a source of activity—sterile though it proved itself—which did at least guarantee a certain continuity of production ; it did not for a moment intend to upset the traditional economic system, but on the contrary respected, upheld and protected it, directing attention mainly to strengthening it against attacks and sudden shocks by opposing conduct which tended to destroy or diminish the human capital. Although the numbers of the slaves diminished and their importance lessened both in industry and agriculture, the Empire did nothing to assist these movements. On the contrary, the measures which it took, and which some were inclined to attribute to a more delicate sense of humanity, were intended to safeguard the system which had been handed down throughout the centuries.

The Stoics at no time thought of demanding the abolition of slavery. Seneca has left us eloquent though somewhat high-flown tirades on human fraternity in the course of which he teaches that the *servi* were human beings, humble friends and companions of our servitude, but these were philosophical or literary theses from which no practical conclusion is to be drawn, as is proved by the fact that he had himself a large staff of slaves. It is of course possible that he spared his own slaves the bad treatment which was meted out lavishly by others but he does not seem at any time to have asked himself the question whether the mere fact of their condition was not contrary to many of his ideas. Moreover, the Stoic conception of liberty consisted much less in the ability to come and go, to work or not to work, or to obey one's own will and not to be subject

to that of another, than in the freedom of the soul and the exclusion of passions which disturb serenity. Epictetus considered that a man was free, even though his body were in chains, so long as his spirit was master of itself. The moral influence of the Stoic sect was in consequence necessarily small in its effect upon the servile system.

Christianity, in this connexion, is deserving of somewhat more lengthy consideration because the part which it played at the end of the Empire seems to have been infinitely greater, especially after the day when Constantine established it in power, and because, from the fourth century onwards, it made converts in large numbers in all classes of society.

We will not enter here into its essential tenets, nor will we inquire whether the thought of Christ logically tolerated or logically rejected the maintenance of servitude. Although the new religion recruited its adherents among the humble and shewed itself harsh towards the rich, it was not long in conquering the higher classes and its tendencies underwent modifications. Once having achieved power, the Church never considered that slavery was contrary to the social principles which it defended, for those Catholic nations which were most directly bound to Rome maintained the slave system in the American and African colonies until the dawn of our own day.

In point of fact, the early Christians upheld the legitimacy of the servile regime and many of them went so far as to say that the end of the world would be delayed so long as the " present state "—that is to say the Empire and its institutions—should be safeguarded. The orthodox and heretical sects which fought for predominance in the fourth century were in harmony when it was a question of recognizing the virtue of the system of production which had subsisted until then, although it was already shewing signs of breaking down at all points. This was not only due to their being to some extent " lost " and, in the etymological sense of the word, " astonished " when surrounded by the complex needs of the Graeco-Roman world, but also to the fact that their ranks were recruited—it is true that they were a minority, but one which was increasing in importance—from among the large owners who were unwilling to sacrifice anything of their ostentation : above all they believed

that if they abstained from attacking the social structure they would lessen the hatred which the official class and the mass of the population combined to display in their regard. Like the Stoics, the Christians continued to preach that the masters should shew some clemency in their relations with their slaves, but they did not go further than this. Like the Stoics, too, they felt disdain for the liberty of the body and exalted only moral liberty—thus offending nobody. Though they proclaimed that all men were equal they hastened to add that this equality was only a virtual one and that in any case the condition of slavery was not incompatible with the maintenance of this principle. They regarded an ascending order of authority as necessary, everyone being in this world called upon to play his particular part worthily, his final destination being fixed by God. Thus, slavery came to be regarded by Christians as of divine right and the Fathers held it to be a normal and estimable institution.

In his Epistle to the Ephesians, Paul recommends captives to obey their masters in all humility. In the Epistle to Timothy he enjoins those captives who have embraced the religion of Christ to perform yet better their duties towards their owners. Peter, in his first Epistle, does not express himself differently. Saint Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, and also St. Cyprian held that the greatest nobility was that of obedience. St. Augustine spoke of slavery as the punishment of sin.

In the apologia of the Christians which he addressed to Marcus Aurelius, Athenagoras lays stress upon their favourable disposition towards slavery, citing as proof the fact that they themselves possessed slaves. The Christian emperors frequently shewed themselves more inhuman than those who were pagans. Constantine, unlike Antoninus, allowed the *servus* to be beaten to death; in 329, unlike Diocletian, he authorized the sale of newborn children; in 332, he condemned to torture the *servus* claimed by two persons at the same time. It should be added that the Council of Gangra in 324 had pronounced anathema those who should turn slaves from their servile duties and that the bishops in the end recommended the restitution of slaves who had taken asylum in the churches,

which had formerly been regarded as conferring the right of sanctuary.

Although interesting examples might be quoted—for instance that of St. Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan, who sold the sacred vessels in order to buy back from the Goths the Christians whom they had captured—their value is only relative, for they do not demonstrate that primitive Christianity insisted upon the liberty of the individual: they shew only that it wished to protect the Christian, as such, from the disastrous consequences of war and invasion.

Those historians who have attributed to the preaching of the first bishops any real effect upon the structure of the State and who have taken certain phrases of St. Jerome, Gregory Nazianzen or Gregory of Nyssa at their literal value are gravely in error. They have translated into everyday life the exhortations which were meant to apply to spiritual life. Christianity has always upheld the social system and political institutions and its conservatism is the more firmly founded in that almost at the beginning it sought adherents throughout all ranks of the Graeco-Roman world and was obliged in order to live to keep on good terms with the higher powers of the day. We must thus seek the explanation of the transformation of slavery elsewhere than in considerations of philosophical or religious nature, which played but a negligible part.

The slave contingent, which was breaking up on the one hand owing to the introduction and the development of the colony system, was also falling apart owing to the increasing number of manumissions. It was not caprice, sentimentality, or ostentation that led the rich masters to make use of the formality of the *manumissio*; they found it to their advantage, in order to increase their revenues and to stimulate their enterprises, to replace captives by freedmen. It was in vain that the monarchs endeavoured to restrict this practice which, especially at Rome, increased the number of persons drawing the food dole; neither taxes on manumissions, nor the restrictions imposed at the beginning of the Empire by the Fufia Caninia, Aelia Sentia, and Julia Norbana laws had any serious effect. The number of ex-slaves who had been raised to the dignity of free men increased from year to year and with it the number of

functions which fell to their share and the possibilities of acquiring wealth.

These then were the characteristics of the decay of the servile system which, hardly perceptible at the time of the Antonines, had become, towards the epoch of Julian, a marked phenomenon.

CHAPTER VIII

THE COLONY SYSTEM

THE colony system, which played a considerable economic rôle in agriculture under the Empire—especially at the end of the Empire—and paved the way to the serfdom of the Middle Ages, rose on the ruins of slavery. It appeared as an intermediate condition between slavery and " liberty ". It was the regime applied to the man working on the land of another, paying rent in nature or money, passing with the property to any new owner—in a word tied down to the property. His condition was similar to that of the slave in that he could not leave the estate ; it differed in so far as he ranked as a free man and enjoyed certain prerogatives of liberty. He was, in short, a tenant who had no right to quit his holding and was obliged to work in perpetuity for the landlord.

Few of the institutions of antiquity have given rise to so much shedding of ink : the diversity and multiplicity of the commentaries and controversies to which the colony system has given rise may easily be conceived if we realize that it carried within it the seeds of the social system of the centuries which came between the collapse of the Roman Empire and—strictly speaking—the contemporary age. The serf of the glebe is the son in the direct line and the legitimate heir, if one may say so, of the colonist.

Discussion bore above all upon the origin and the date of the first appearance of this new phenomenon. Did it come into existence only at the end of the Empire, when the evolution was in full swing, when slavery was crumbling on every side and from its disruption a more complex system was being evolved ? Was, therefore, the initial idea attributable to the Romans or had it been borrowed from the barbarians who surrounded the territory, permeating it little by little and introducing at least partially their own customs ?

The reader will not expect to find here (for it would be out of place and not directly connected with our subject) any lengthy treatment of this very important problem, which has been dealt with by numerous historians and jurists.

What is certain—and this conviction is clearly to be derived from a perusal of the Roman writers—is that the colony system is considerably later than the second period of the Empire and also that it owed its existence to a variety of factors which do not always appear to be correlated.

Although it was not until the time of Diocletian that they received a precise and complete—though not a final—status, the colonists were designated by the name which they continued to bear much more than a century earlier. Varro, Columella, and Tacitus mention them expressly and devote fairly lengthy passages to a consideration of their probable future. Columella recommended that they should be entrusted with the cultivation of estates on which the owner did not reside, for they furnished a considerable return and offered serious guarantees of serious toil. Tacitus praised their energy and said that, through them, the owner was assured of clothing, wheat and cattle. The colony system was being called useful and lucrative long before it assumed its legal form and took its place among current institutions.

It is thus clear that the Romans knew this institution in its essential outlines in the first century after Christ and even much earlier, for, from the year 38 B.C., barbarian hordes were transplanted into Roman territory and attached, in exchange for rent to be paid by them, to the cultivation of estates of fairly large size. To these barbarians, for the most part of Germanic race, the condition of colonist was not unknown and it was unnecessary for their victors to teach them its details, for the institution was already in operation in their native lands. Tacitus tells us that on the right bank of the Rhine there were numerous *laeti*, whose status was similar to that of the colonists of the Empire.

The sources of the colony system were various and may be enumerated here:

1. Owners having at their disposal large numbers of slaves considered it profitable to change their situation

and to give them, together with their personal liberty, a field to cultivate against rent. The reduction in the number of slaves, which coincided with the progressive abandonment of conquests, tended to generalize this economic conception, for it was clear that far more *servi* than *liberi*, or *coloni*, were needed to accomplish a given task.

2. Small owners, who were frightened by civil wars and had come to realize the precariousness of their situation—menaced by Imperial freedmen or by the Praetorians—wished at any price to liberate themselves from their fears and to find a way of escape from instability. They "recommended" themselves to the holders of power. They made over their lands to the former but continued to cultivate them, paying rent in exchange for the assurance of protection against ill-treatment or spoliation. When we compare this paragraph with the preceding one, we see clearly that the colony system was an intermediary condition between liberty and slavery; its recruits were obtained both among the *liberi* who had fallen and among the slaves who were rising in the scales of fortune. Thus it was fated from the beginning to constitute a mixed system and to present complex characteristics borrowed from both sides.

3. It was in the interest of the Empire as in that of the large landlords, the smaller owners, and the slaves themselves to assist this development. There was even a double interest: it was essential that agriculture should continue to exist and should be spared as far as possible the dangers by which it was surrounded and the collapse which threatened it: otherwise food would run short and the system would crumble at the base, for the cultivation of the soil remained the fundamental activity. When, however, the numbers of slaves grew gradually less and the small farmers gave way to discouragement, lassitude, and the sense of misery, the countryside ran to waste. The colony system seemed an appropriate remedy in that it supplied an alternative to servile labour and kept on the land the free men who were ready to leave it.

It was necessary, too, for the State, whose expenditure was increasing as its formidable administrative system spread, to secure for itself a definite minimum of resources.

It did not hesitate before dubious expedients, such as eccentric taxes or depreciation of the currency, especially during the last centuries. In the main, however, it was the agricultural and rural classes which furnished the greater part of the public revenue and the colony system undoubtedly offered a guarantee of its regularity.

4. It was on account of this double consideration that the Emperors established as colonists an ever-increasing number of barbarians. The nearer we approach the end the more marked do we find this tendency. The colonists played in their sphere a part analogous to that of the *curiales*, the *monetarii*, or certain of the guilds. They formed an integral part of the complex scale of occupations whose object it was to safeguard the continued existence of the Empire. In the same way as the Germanic hordes were called upon to take the places of the dwindling citizens and to fill the gaps in the army, the barbarians who had been subjugated by the monarchs, or those who, like famished animals, were gnawing at the frontiers, were used as substitutes for the husbandmen who had gone. We may follow from age to age this transplantation of men of another race, who frequently filled the double rôle of soldiers and producers. Augustus had already adopted the plan and Vespasian had imitated him. Marcus Aurelius opened the Empire to the Marcomanni; Aurelian and Probus made the system general, the second of these sovereigns ceding vast territories in Thrace to the Bastarnae who were given at the same time cattle and agricultural implements. In the fourth century, many thousands of colonists, taken from the peoples who were attacking the confines of the Empire, were distributed among the various provinces. It will thus be seen that the colony system, although it corresponded very closely to the needs, both political and economic, of the time, can be traced back to a variety of origins.

It is not surprising therefore that the system should have grown up slowly, before assuming definite shape in the fourth century. The principal enactments which regulated its working were the Edict of Constantine in 332, which categorically forbade the colonist to leave the soil, the Constitution of 409, the Theodosian Code, and the Digest, but it is certain that these organic enactments did not in

general do more than confirm and consolidate customs which already existed and were accepted as a matter of course.

If we refer to these texts, we see that the status of colonist was based upon the sale contract of the slave, to which was annexed a special article, or upon the will of those who instituted it, or, again, upon the working of the juridical rules of limitation, or, finally (and this was the most common case toward the end), the colonist was bound to his lot by inheritance. Further, the State created wholesale a new class of serfs of the glebe, the beggars for example, being incorporated into it in the year 382.

The leases and contracts which tied the tenant to the lessor varied in their conditions. Some ran for five years, some for the same period with the tacit right of renewal, some even for a hundred years. The two latter categories gave rise to the perpetual tenures. It is, for example, clear that a man who had accepted towards another man an undertaking which was to last a hundred years was no longer the real master of his individuality and that he was tied to the soil by an obligation which could not be eradicated.

At first, the colony system took stronger root in the State domains than elsewhere, but the great landlords came to realize the advantages to be derived from a division of the soil into numerous small holdings distributed among lessees who were compelled to pay rent. The principle gave rise to a multitude of transactions and speculations. Persons of standing furnished capital lavishly, providing the colonists with the indispensable material and recouping themselves by collecting enormous interest upon the advances which they made.

The obligations of the colonists consisted of the performance of impressed labour which took the form of two days' ploughing, two days' weeding, two days' harvesting, and above all of a rent charge which was one-third, one-quarter, or one-fifth of the yield, according to its nature. Rent and impressed labour were generally combined on lands belonging to the Empire. On those of private individuals the rent excluded the obligation to contribute work, but it comprised, apart from the contractual obligation to furnish a proportion of the yield, a fixed sum. These

charges became more and more crushing for those who had to bear them and they coincided with incessant increases in taxation.

The rights of the colonists were definitely fixed in the fourth century. They could marry and enjoy savings, which, however, passed to the owner in default of any other heir. They were held to be free and had the right to acquire property. Their liberty, however, was hardly more than superficial. A constitution of Theodosius and Justinian says very truly, with reference to this social class: "*Licet conditione videantur ingenui: servi tamen terræ ipsius, cui nati sunt, existimentur.*"

The colonists could not be sold without the land, nor could the land be sold without them: they became more and more unable to free themselves from the bond of the soil—up to a point when even the thirty years' limitation clause could not be applied in their favour.

Such were the general lines of this institution which was to become the keystone of the arch of the feudal age, and which, by an almost imperceptible transition, had evolved from slavery. Even in the days of Diocletian it had acquired primordial importance in the Empire. It appeared as the deciding factor, as the most perfect characteristic of that Imperial epoch in which the old economic forms were melting away and on all sides new ones were being built up. It contributed, together with the whole system of narrow classification which was typical of the age, to subordinate to the despotic and bureaucratic State a considerable proportion of the population. The link between the colony system and the official guild is evident.

CHAPTER IX

THE ARTISAN CLASS AND THE GUILDS

THE artisan class occupied under the Empire a much greater place than in the preceding period and its importance grew in proportion to the decline of servile labour. The guild organization which, from the time of Alexander Severus, was to confine in a close network of prescriptions and constraints the population of free workers, caused a remarkable extension of this class; nevertheless it failed to put a stop to industrial decay or to prevent the economic catastrophe of the fourth century.

Manual labour was never held in honour in the days of antiquity. It was despised because it was performed by slaves and it was virtually reserved for the slaves because it was despised. It came to pass, however, that, as on the one hand the ranks of the slaves diminished and, on the other, they were not reinforced, free men were obliged and sometimes found it profitable to undertake certain industrial tasks. The prejudice which had existed for centuries against manual labour did not completely disappear and we find it expressed by the writers—in particular by Seneca—but it tended to diminish. We know that the father of Vespasian was an agricultural contractor and that the father of Maxentius was a craftsman.

The artisan class, however, reduced to its own resources and initiative, did not offer the necessary guarantees of adequate effort to the emperors, who were concerned in the highest degree for the preservation of the economic equilibrium. In this form of society, which was based upon slavery alone, the attrition of the servile class gave rise to fears which it is difficult for us to understand. Fears were expressed that the world was coming to an end. The magistrates were afraid that the public services would no longer be maintained, that the industries in private hands and necessary to the people's subsistence and to the life of the State might collapse, or that the collective needs

could no longer be supplied. The Empire was so complex an organization that terrible catastrophe might result from the failure of even the smallest wheel in the machine. The government therefore not only made a point of encouraging the artisan class as it had encouraged that of the colonists but also set to work to bring the artisans under discipline and to impose precise obligations upon them in such a way as to obtain the maximum production and to obviate the risks of a crisis which it saw on every side. In affirming its intervention and in guaranteeing the continuity of the public and private services, it did not fail to remember the requirements of the treasury. The financial demands were imposed no less upon commerce and industry than upon the land. We thus see clearly the reason why the artisan class was given an official organization and why it was made a docile piece of the formidable machine which the government had assembled.

The guilds remained compulsory and the industrial or commercial function was raised to the dignity of a public charge. It was transmitted by inheritance with the duties and privileges attaching to it, and nobody could escape this obligation without committing an offence against the law. Such was the spirit of the institution in the third and fourth centuries. It is desirable that we should investigate how it developed up to this point and by what means it came to present the strange aspect which we know it to have had under Constantine and Theodosius.

The reader is not unaware of its origins. During the civil crisis which prepared the way for the ruin of the Republic, the guilds had led a precarious existence. They were regarded with suspicion by the slave-owners, who feared the competition of free men, and by the conservative magistrates who shuddered at the thought of their political influence. Caesar had suppressed them but they had to some extent revived in the troubled years which followed the assassination of the dictator. Augustus, who nourished a secret suspicion of them, abolished them in principle and only allowed to exist *de facto* the ancient and "useful" colleges and such as obtained special permission. The latter, however, was only granted sparingly and under specific conditions, so that the government maintained a practical control over

all the guilds, even those which were officially tolerated. Trajan extended this regime to the whole Empire and documents shew that though he created at Rome the guild of bakers, he forbade—or rather caused Pliny the Younger to forbid—the artisans' associations in Bithynia. Permission was given by the Emperor or the Senate as the case might be and a right of supervision was held by whichever authority had issued the permission. In any case the right of dissolution remained intact. Marcus Aurelius conferred upon the colleges the right to receive legacies and it was this grant which constituted for them the solemn inauguration of the era of privileges.

With the reign of Alexander Severus, development was accelerated. It was with regret that the first emperors had seen the colleges come into existence and had permitted them to subsist, for they feared that they might contain the seeds of sedition. The Oriental form of monarchy which was then growing up—it was based upon a powerful bureaucracy and it organized a minute and vexatious classification of citizens—on the contrary fostered the guilds, though it made them strictly subservient to its own ends. At the close of the third century the transformation was complete and the depopulation which had set in generally, together with the economic crisis and the necessity of creating fresh taxes, helped to precipitate it. The artisan became a mere functionary, linked up with other functionaries of the same kind and bound to devote his energies continually to the same form of production or incur the wrath of the Prince. The system of forced labour was set by the side of that of servile labour but the latter did not cede everywhere at once.

In the final phase of the law, the members of colleges were subjected to obligations and benefited by privileges which it is of interest to examine.

The obligations affected both persons and property. The property of those who were " incorporated " was subject to a lien in the form of a kind of debt contracted towards the State and this lien could not be removed. For instance, the shipbuilders were obliged to build ships and to spend, in execution of the charge with which they were entrusted, up to three-quarters of their fortune. The nature of their

occupation presupposes in any case a certain amount of wealth. Again, the butchers were responsible, at their own expense, for any shortage of supplies. As to the status of the individual, although he was theoretically free, he was in fact at the service of the State and obliged to play a part from which it became increasingly difficult to escape. He was obliged to work and to find the collaborators necessary to the execution of his task. Among these free artisans there were some who relied on their own resources and others whom circumstances obliged to recruit a paid or slave personnel. The guild held sway both in the small industries and in the crafts, which already called for a certain degree of labour concentration. But in both categories, personal labour was the rule. Valentinian II said that the butchers must toil day and night for the people.

Some attempted to relinquish their function by divesting themselves of their property, but in that case the new owner was obliged to perform the duties, for somebody had to perform them and the State could not without peril to itself allow unemployment to exist. The severities of the law made any escape from this rigorous constraint practically impossible. In 371, Valens declared that the shipbuilders of the East had assumed a perpetual charge. The regime was so strict that handicrafts became hereditary and that this heredity neither surprised nor offended anybody. A constitution of 371 laid down that " whosoever shall take in marriage the daughter of a fisher of purple shall be incorporated in the profession of his father-in-law ". It was, above all in respect of the hard and ill-paid occupation of mining that the Emperors adopted a multiplicity of precautions and issued regulations of Draconian severity. Valens and Valentinian I ordered fugitives to be tracked down and persons sheltering them to be severely flogged. And, to make sure of recruits for certain trades, the colleges were given more or less trained assistants who had been taken by force. Justinian handed the vagabonds of Constantinople to the bakers and it is probable that similar measures had already been adopted by his predecessors.

It will be readily believed that strikes were regarded by the last Emperors as social crimes deserving of the severest penalties. They do not seem to have been very numerous ;

the historians cite a few, especially among the bakers, who were in the strongest position to oppose the ruling authority.

Various privileges corresponded to the heavy charges which were laid upon the members of the colleges. Equality was by no means a characteristic of imperial society, which offered the spectacle of the most complex scales of importance. Every citizen was placed in a definite category from which it was practically impossible for him to escape of his own free will, and this category was differentiated from the neighbouring ones by the rights and duties assigned to it. Since they exacted from the artisans continual service and imposed upon them, besides irksome and more or less ill-paid labour, the total or partial sacrifice of their fortune, the Emperors recognized the necessity of reconciling them with their status and therefore distributed various prerogatives amongst them.

These prerogatives consisted, at first, of the exemption from municipal functions, which were greatly feared because they carried with them the risk of exposure to pecuniary losses which were often very considerable, secondly of exemption from the tutelage which the Romans always feared, and thirdly of freedom from the incapacities which were imposed upon the unmarried and the childless. Claudius was the first to decide that the shipbuilders should be relieved of all political obligations if they possessed a ship able to hold 50,000 bushels or five ships with cargo space for 10,000 bushels each. The same Emperor assured the wheat merchants against the risks of storm and he conferred upon them and upon the oil merchants dispensation from the payment of direct taxes. Caracalla made the immunities general and finally, Valentinian I and Honorius in the fourth century decided that the artisans enrolled in the colleges should not be recruited in the armed militia. When one reflects upon the military character which the Empire at all times assumed, it is seen that this concession was of great value and it is of itself proof of the importance attached by the monarchs to the producers and middlemen.

Apart, however, from these general exemptions, the members of the guilds benefited by other advantages reserved for special categories. The bakers were provided either free of charge or at a low price with the corn sent by the provinces to the Treasury and with premises. The shipbuilders, of all

classes the most respected and humoured, did not pay the customs duties or *portoria* which fell heavily upon trade. This privilege was confirmed by Gratian in 380. They were also accorded the dignity of equestrian rank. We have little general information as to their earnings. We only know that Constantine paid to those of the East a *solidus* or 12s. 8d. for each thousand bushels carried and that he furnished them with the wood used. They also kept 40% of the corn brought from Asia Minor or Egypt. The butchers of Rome, in compensation for their risks, were granted, from the year 367, 16,000 amphorae of wine and kept for themselves 5% of the amount of lard which they would have otherwise furnished. For the fullers of the capital a special spring was reserved. The lime-burners had the monopoly of furnishing lime for the State and obtained an amphora of wine for every three cartloads. The monopolies, moreover, became very numerous and one of the most prominent was that of the Roman baggage-porters.

Although all the colleges were regarded as fulfilling an official function, a distinction was drawn between those which had a public character and provided for the subsistence or security of the masses—the shipbuilders, bakers, and butchers —and those whose character remained private—the *argentarii* or bankers, *tignarii* or woodworkers, *lapidarii* and *marmorarii*, who worked stone and marble, *centonarii* or manufacturers of coverings, *medici*, *aquarii* or water-carriers, *negotiatores artis cretariae* or potters, *canneforii* or manufacturers of matting, etc.—and, as is natural, the obligations imposed upon the former were heavier and their privileges correspondingly greater.

The guilds did not possess any uniform organization. Nor were they normally strictly confined to members of a single trade. It often happened that the number of artisans in a given trade did not seem sufficiently high to justify a refusal of alliance with members of another. At Lyons, potters and blacksmiths were to be found among the carpenters : at Antium, the carpenters and money-changers were united in one group. Freedmen were sometimes admitted to the colleges. We do not know whether women were admitted to the men's colleges. The latter contained as many as 1,200 and 1,500 members and their membership

tended to increase in the last centuries, the restrictions imposed by the first Emperors having gradually disappeared.

Each college had an *album* or official list of its members, honorary members and *patres*. It drew up statutes and dealt in its committee meetings with such business as arose. It elected its chiefs and conferred powers upon them; the latter administered the collective property of the guild—which was at times very considerable. Thus the bakers of Rome owned land in Europe and Africa, buildings in the capital and warehouses at Portus. The supervision exercised by the authorities was vigilant and often vexatious, as is shewn by the innumerable constitutions of the fourth century, and at Rome more especially a large staff was engaged in this duty.

The colleges possessed meeting-places and their philanthropic and also religious character persisted until the last. They conducted charitable enterprises for such of their members as had fallen upon hard times or had been the victims of calamity—the funds being raised by means of monthly contributions and assisted by legacies received—they cared for orphans, made loans to the needy and helped widows. They were particularly concerned to provide their members with an honourable burial, either by giving a death-grant to the family or by paying the funeral expenses. The fullers of Aquileia and the mule-drivers of Verona had a cemetery strictly reserved for them; the aqueduct labourers at Venusia, the goldworkers of Caesarea, the shipbuilders of Arles and the embroiderers of Rome erected collective monuments to their deceased members. The funerals usually took place with great pomp, all members being required to attend and their absence being punished on some occasions by fines.

The guilds were very numerous. At the time of Alexander Severus they had attained at Rome the number of 32 and they certainly increased afterwards. Many had a complicated history, such as the shipbuilders who brought corn from Egypt to Puteoli, and afterwards to Ostia, and there transferred their cargoes to the *caudicarii*. The watermen formed colleges which were reckoned among the most important and were found on the Rhône, on Lake Garda, at Verona, Como, Mantua, Seville, Lutetia, Lyons, Arles, and Narbo,

on the Aar, the Neckar, and the Moselle, and as far afield as Pannonia. Again, the bakers, by the nature of the services which they rendered, were called upon to constitute groups throughout the whole of the Empire. Those of Rome numbered 458 in the fourth century; each was obliged to bake at least 100 bushels of corn daily and they were subordinated both to the prefect of the city and to the prefect of the *annona*. The *suarii* or butchers were also held in high esteem: not merely did they kill pigs and sell the meat but they went to fetch the animals in Samnium, Lucania, and Campania. There were also the *calcis coctores et vectores* who furnished lime and were formed into colleges in a number of provincial towns; the millers, who separated from the bakers in the fourth century when the water-mill came into current use; the oil merchants, who formed a guild in the second century and who traded with Baetica and Africa, making their headquarters at Rome and Ostia; the wholesale wine-dealers, to whom Alexander Severus granted an official organization, which was subsequently modified by Aurelian, who distinguished between those receiving wine from the tributary countries and those placing it on sale; the *fabri* or building labourers, the *centonarii* who made covers and cushions, and the *dendrophorii* or wood merchants. In 140 towns, according to Waltzing, one at least of the last three corporations was to be found. The same author gives figures for the provincial towns which are evidence of the extension of the tendency towards incorporation, citing the musicians of Casinum, the water-carriers of Venusia, the silver-beaters of Smyrna, the muleteers of Pollentia, the goldsmiths of Pompeii, the coopers of Tibur (Tivoli), the jewellers of Shershell, the smiths of Dijon, the masons of Corduba, Arles and Nîmes, the cooks of Cologne, the fullers of Carthage and the dyers of Thessalonica (Salonica). Lyons and Narbonne were in Gaul the main guild centres and in this respect almost rivalled Rome and Constantinople.

It would be interesting to know with some degree of precision what were the wages received by the members of the colleges who enjoyed the full status of artisans. The insufficiency of statistics, however, for this epoch, as for those which preceded it, stands in the way. Such particulars

as we possess regarding the life of the workers under the Empire are vague and conjectural. Only one reliable document has reached us: the famous tariff of Diocletian of the year 301, which was placed on record in the inscription of Stratoniceia. It must, however, be observed in the first place that it was drawn up at a time of great crisis and is consequently the reflection of exceptional circumstances, and secondly, that it fixes a maximum and not a normal scale; thirdly, although it gives us an idea of what we must call the hierarchy of occupations, the conclusions which have been drawn from it are much contested, since the bases of calculation were not by any means uniform. According to Waddington, the day's work of a ship's carpenter was reckoned at 2s. 7d., that of a house-painter at 3s. 10½d., of a decorative painter 7s. 9d., of a labourer on the land 1s. 3½d., and a shepherd 1s. 2½d. A barber received per head 1¼d., a teacher of reading 2s. 7d. per child per month, and a bath attendant 1¼d. per bather. With these rates of pay it is of interest to compare, again taking the same author as our authority, the cost of certain articles and foodstuffs. A hectolitre (22 gallons) of rye cost at most 16s. 5d., the same amount of oats 8s. 9d., a litre of common wine 9¼d., a pint of oil 8d., a pound of pork 10d., a pound of mutton or beef 7d., etc., so that the cost of living must have been relatively high.

The estimates made by Dureau de la Malle are completely different. According to him, a labourer received at most 6½d., a mason, carpenter or lime-burner 1s. 0½d., a marble or mosaic worker 1s. 3d. and a smith and a baker 1s. 0½d. He puts the cost of living at a proportionately low figure—wine, he considers, did not cost more than 4d. a litre and oil 2½d. a pint, pork 2¾d. a pound, beef and mutton 1¾d. and butter 3¾d. per pound.

We shall be satisfied to quote the two sets of figures without attempting to say which is the more nearly right. The edict of 301, to which we shall return, is one of the few statistical documents which antiquity has left us and in the absence of a trustworthy foundation on which to build our conclusions we cannot hope to derive definite figures from it, either in respect of wages or of the cost of life to the artisan.

CHAPTER X

AGRICULTURE

AGRICULTURE under the Empire shared the general vicissitudes of the time. It recovered a little in the time of Augustus and during the Pax Romana, only to fall back during the third and fourth centuries, when the fields became the prey of weeds and those who cultivated the land fled in all directions, in order to escape either the violences of the barbarian invaders or the crushing burden of taxation.

In order properly to follow the curve described by the fortunes of those who exploited the land during these few hundred years it is necessary to bear closely in mind the historical conditions. It is the latter which, above all, brought about the prosperity of landed property or the ruin of holdings, both large and small. So long as the sovereigns assured the maintenance of public order, kept the roads under supervision and ensured the upkeep of the public utility works, owners, farmers and colonists felt encouraged to produce, and at certain times, Northern Italy, Sicily, and the provinces outside the Peninsula attained such a degree of agricultural prosperity as we fail to find in the preceding phase under Augustus. When, on the contrary, the Praetorian armies were engaged in interminable battle with one another and when, again, the Germanic hordes were pouring into the Cisalpine country, into Thrace, Gaul, and Spain, the yield diminished almost to vanishing point and vast areas were turned into deserts. It seemed as though a whole tradition of deep-rooted civilization had been suddenly overturned.

There are, however, yet other considerations. During the first two centuries of the Empire, agriculture made great progress, of which Pliny the Elder has left us a brief survey. The exploitation of the soil left the empirical stage; the treatises of Cato and Varro, and of Columella, the latest of these specialist authors, led to the penetration among the masses of farmers—or at all events among the

larger owners—of practical advice for increasing the yield, and this spread little by little down to the most modest husbandmen. The implements used were at the same time improved and the practice of irrigating and manuring became both widespread and methodical.

To the increase in professional skill on the part of the farmers in general is due in a certain measure the fact that the reduction in the numbers of slaves did not at once lead to graver consequences. Side by side with this technical improvement the colonies formed and spread. The colonist restored small agriculture in a whole series of districts and applied to it—with an ardour which the slave could hardly show—the knowledge and experience which he had acquired. But the colony system was itself, for a great part, the product of a troubled and unsafe epoch, and when the disturbances became general and the insecurity permanent, when the barbarian flood spread over millions of square miles, the whole of human activities experienced a setback and the new technical achievements which had cost centuries of effort were threatened with extinction. In the fourth century, at the time of Diocletian, Constantine, Julian and Theodosius, the peasants revolted against their thankless lot; the provinces which had once been the most fertile were pictures of desolation; there were no harvests and in consequence none of the agricultural products indispensable to normal existence. It was then that the prices of all commodities rose, that famine began to threaten, and seditious movements to multiply. The agricultural crisis was the graver in that labour in the fields was still indispensable and—as must never be forgotten—the greater part of mankind at this time, as indeed through all antiquity, sought their subsistence in the products of the soil.

In the famous phrase of Pliny, the *latifundia* lost Italy. During the two hundred years which followed the reign of Augustus, they spread unceasingly over the Peninsula, and we have seen how circumstances favoured its development. So long as the numbers of slaves were sufficient, it remained the characteristic feature of vast stretches of land. The public lands had fallen to the treasury. Latium, Picenum, Samnium and Sicily—areas of large holdings—retained the system which they had acquired at the end of the Republic.

According to certain authorities, half of Africa was owned, towards the year 100, by six persons.

The *latifundia* continued to produce their well-known effects by giving a low yield and depopulating entire districts; as early as the first century of our era, Columella was pointing to the regrettable consequences of the system and denouncing the absenteeism of the landlords, but here again it is well to make reservations and to avoid hasty generalizations. Account must also be taken of the new conditions which came into existence in the third century, and prepared the way, together with the colony system, for the reconstitution of agriculture on a small scale—which by no means signifies that the practice of the latter had succeeded in postponing or attenuating a crisis, the causes of which we have already considered.

Augustus and his successors had planted colonies in a large number of places, their creation being intended to attach new populations to the soil. They existed in Africa at Tingis (Tangier), Rusaddir (Melilla), Portus Magnus (Mers-el-Kebir), Caesarea (Shershell), Icosium (Algiers); in Italy at Beneventum, Acerrae, Cumae, Nuceria, Sora, and Ariminum, which were built in some cases on the site of older and already deserted colonies. Certain of these became the centre of agricultural estates which were distributed amongst thousands of men. Horace, Virgil, Martial and Juvenal celebrated the benefits of these small holdings and though their poetic propaganda was not as fruitful as the government might have hoped or the politicians of the time have wished, it did not remain entirely ineffective. They had always to combat the indifference of the mob, who preferred the life of the towns and the advantages which it carried with it and no longer demanded, as they had before, agrarian laws and the partition of the *ager publicus*. Later, the development of the colony system and the practice of granting long leases and tenancy agreements changed the aspect of certain regions in which the large estates, whilst remaining in existence, were conciliated and combined with small farms. The owners of the *latifundia* were the more ready to lease their property or to allow it to be rented because they were obliged to pay taxes even for uncultivated land.

The small holders never completely disappeared from

the more fertile parts of the Empire, and Pliny the Younger himself cites irrefutable documents in this connexion. At Beneventum, very few estates were worth more than £600 of our money. At Placentia and in the surrounding district there were only two exceeding £10,000 in value. In Narbonensis, the arable land was divided into a very large number of holdings and afforded a livelihood for a large population.

Historians are agreed in praising the agricultural prosperity of immense territories at the time of the first Caesars and under the Antonines. Africa was covered with growing crops. The valley of the Mejerdah in what is now Tunis was a long succession of large villages living by the cultivation of cereals or by the production of oil. Carthage produced and exported wheat, Tangier, horses and wines, Hadrumetum the oil which is derived from its innumerable factories. It was currently said that Numidia yielded one hundredfold. Cyrenaica rivalled her in fertility. Egypt, which never ceased to be regarded as one of the granaries of Rome, was naturally ever-present in the minds of the Roman administration, and Augustus had the canals of Egypt cleansed. The mountain sides of Asia Minor were cultivated and great flocks of sheep pastured there. Syria in parts resembled a superb garden, and the olive-trees of the Orontes were celebrated. Narbonensis, at the time of Hadrian, exported agricultural products of all kinds. The other parts of Gaul were devoted to the production of cereals and the geographers affirm that no land there lay fallow. Cisalpine Gaul furnished millet, wine and wool; Sicily and Sardinia cereals and cattle. Noricum and Baetica, at the two extremities of the Empire, had turned their soil to excellent account in spite of the difficulties which arose from a hilly and rocky land.

In the second century after Christ agricultural prosperity was undeniable. Nowhere was there a lack of grain. New methods had been applied to the culture of the vine, of more or less contestable value, but the skill of those who practised them had manifestly increased. During the first 150 or 200 years of the Empire, the most appreciated vintages were the Caecuban, Falernian, Venafran and Signian-Alban; Capua, Naples, Pompeii, Brixentum (Brixen),

Messina, Syracuse and Beneventum were the centres of important and famous vineyards. We also find references to those of Baetica, Tarraconensis, Baeterrae, Chios, Cos, Smyrna, Clazomenae, Ephesus, Gaza, Ascalon, and Laodicea. Pliny the Elder tells us that to the must there were generally added plaster, clay, chalk, resin and pitch. Wine was also frequently made from raisins and by the addition of water to grape-skins. Certain products were sold at a high price, Chian wine fetching up to 1s. 9½d. a litre and up to £1 an amphora, but two-thirds of the finest wines came from Italy.

We are told by Pliny the Elder that horticulture, like vegetable-growing, was in his time widespread in the provinces furthest from Rome. The habit of eating fruit had grown greatly after the epoch of Augustus, when there had already come into existence, according to Virgil, the practice of grafting the walnut on to the arbutus, the plum on the plane and the cherry on the young elm. The Sabine country was celebrated for the richness of its orchards, and its apricots were sold for as much as 5s.; its plums and peaches were as much sought after as the pears of Campania; the chestnut tree had been cultivated in the neighbourhood of Tarentum and Naples, but Spain, Gaul, and Thrace made every effort to satisfy the passion of the rich Romans for the choicer fruits and Britain cultivated the cherry, which had arrived from the East at the end of the Republic.

This period of great prosperity was succeeded by the phase of terrible distress of which we have already seen the main outlines. Even at the beginning of the Empire certain regions had, owing to special circumstances, become uncultivated steppes, such as Lucania, of which Seneca speaks, where pasture land had supplanted arable land. But other districts still had their serried harvests, their gardens and their vines, and the sterile spaces were but dots on the landscape. It was towards the years 230 or 240 that the economic decline of the Empire began and it rapidly became accentuated. At this moment, Greece, torn by a succession of civil wars and almost devoid of inhabitants, was no more than a land of desolation. Arcadia and Messenia, according to the historians of the time, offered the most sinister aspect with their denuded mountains, their destroyed cities and their fields untouched by the

plough and covered with brushwood. Ruin spread with extraordinary rapidity along the whole boundary of the Empire, preceded by the barbarian invasion. In certain parts the emperors tried to stop it by reducing the land tax but their efforts were wasted. The inhabitants of the countryside fled, or they let their fields go to ruin, living from hand to mouth and giving no thought to the future which daily became more precarious. Gaul, which had shewn splendid agricultural activity under the Antonines and had derived the greater part of her wealth from the soil, shewed unmistakable signs of decadence. Her farmers complained of the insecurity of life, the rapacity of the fiscal authorities and the bad state of the roads, which were allowed to go to ruin and were not repaired. The writers of the third century relate that a chief of the Aedui said: "We are abandoning our fields because they no longer return to us what we spend on them." There were no more slaves to accomplish the heavy tasks. The colonists were tired of producing for the treasury and keeping for themselves nothing but a meagre subsistence which was always in danger. To distress is attributable the formidable insurrection of the Bagaudae which Maximian drowned in blood in 286, but the repression of this rising did not restore to Gaul her old fertility.

Italy underwent the same fate as Greece, as the plains of the Aedui and the Sequani, and as all the provinces of the north and the south. Campania itself in the fourth century presented a lamentable aspect. Humanity had everywhere slipped back several hundreds of years. Agriculture gave up the fight against the calamities of all kinds which befell it. How can we then be surprised that the price of all commodities attained a fantastic height and that the majority of foodstuffs had risen beyond the reach of the poor? Let us recall the words of the preamble to the edict of 301, which in any case only throws a very imperfect light upon the economic situation and—attributing the increase in prices solely to rapacity—remains mute as regards the real causes of the phenomenon.

"We bring," says Diocletian, "the remedy which has long been sought, and we care not for the complaints which our intervention will call forth from bad citizens who, though

they knew that our silence was an appeal for moderation, did not wish to pay attention to it. Everyone knows from his own experience that the foodstuffs which are sold daily in the markets of the cities have risen to exorbitant prices, that the unbridled passion for gain is no longer tempered by the quantity of imports or by the abundance of the harvests, and that it has led to the benefits of Heaven being regarded as an evil." Pouring condemnation upon the spirit of pillage on the ground that it caused prices to mount to eight times their normal level and holding up to scorn the manœuvres of the producers and sellers who wished to fleece the soldier, the Emperor proceeded to lay down, not the price of goods, but a maximum, and threatened capital punishment for all delinquents, especially such as concealed foodstuffs. This maximum, according to Waddington, was fixed at 17s. for a hectolitre of rye, at 3s. 1d. for a brace of chickens, at 2s. 1d. for a brace of duck, 7s. 9d. for a hare and 5s. 2d. for a hundred eggs. To measure the rise, of which these maxima alone are proof, we must remember that in the preceding periods, living was very cheap in Rome and still cheaper in the provinces. Let us remember too that the edict of Diocletian dates from 301 and that the increase in the cost of living tended to become accentuated in the following years as the economic crisis became more acute.

CHAPTER XI

MINING

DURING the first two hundred years of the Empire the mines were exploited with great activity and brought considerable resources in to the treasury. Although certain of the deposits which were worked under the Republic appeared exhausted or had been gradually abandoned by the concession-holders or the administrators, who were at a loss when dealing with other than the richest ores, further deposits were discovered in the outlying parts of the territory; and the number of men occupied in the extraction of metal and stone tended on the whole to increase. But the barbarian invasions and the domestic troubles delivered the same blow to the mining industry as to all the others. Moreover the fate which awaited the workers in the galleries of the mines was so hard that they had no incentive to remain and in several provinces, especially in Thrace, they appealed to the hordes who were assembled beyond the frontier, assisted their invasion and confided themselves to the invaders.

The regime of the mines developed with the Empire. The rights of the State were energetically defended against the great financial groups which, until then, had obtained authorization to work the mines, and the Crown prerogatives were re-established or maintained in their full extent. The bureaucratic centralization, which became more accentuated in every direction after the accession of Augustus, was exercised in this regard with singular tenacity.

The Emperors attached to the public domains or to their private estates a certain number of the more important deposits: the gold of Aquileia, of Spain and of Dacia, the copper of Lusitania and Cyprus, the lead and tin of Baetica, the sulphur of Sicily, the quicksilver of Sisapon, the marble of Luna, of Hymettus and of Proconnesus, the porphyry of Egypt, the emeralds of Berenice, etc. Each exploitation was controlled by an administrator, who was often a slave,

assisted by technical directors and engineers, who were usually also slaves. The administrator was under the orders of a *procurator patrimonii*, who resided at Rome. All these mines co-operated to ensure to the treasury a permanent and considerable source of income, and the extraction of gold in Spain alone brought in £880,000 annually in the reign of Vespasian.

There remained nevertheless some mines which the Emperor did not keep for himself but conceded to private persons in exchange for a rent bearing a fixed relation to the yield. These rents, which were very high, were also a valuable source of revenue, since for two mines in Spain—each of small size—they amounted to respectively £3,520 and £7,000. The conditions which were imposed upon the lessees were inscribed in the document constituting the contract and were rigid and precise.

There is still in existence an administrative regulation which dates back to the time of Hadrian and has reference to the silver and copper deposits in Portugal. It was discovered in 1906 engraved upon a table of bronze which is called the table of Aljustrel. The system which was applied in this case was neither direct exploitation nor leasing. The State had ceded its rights to the contracting firm after the latter had indemnified the owner of the soil, but the lessees were obliged to pay to the fiscal authorities a rent calculated upon the yield : it corresponded to 50% and was payable in silver.

The table of Aljustral shows that, contrary to the practice which subsequently prevailed, the Imperial administration attempted to divide up the pits as far as possible. The lessee was obliged to bore and exploit as soon as a preliminary period of six months which was allowed for preparatory work had expired. The work of his miners had to be carried out in an area with precisely defined boundaries. He was obliged to have the ore carted into the workshops or factories in which the loads were pounded, sifted and washed, and in order to prevent any possibility of fraud this transport had to take place during the hours of daylight.

If either payment to the fiscal authorities or the exploitation of the mine should be suspended, the contract was declared void and it was open to any other person to occupy

the abandoned workings provided that he conformed to the regulations: it sufficed for him to make a declaration, in exchange for which he was handed a receipt. The anxiety not to allow any source of State revenue to run dry is seen very clearly in this clause. Supervision was exercised by a *procurator*, who could not interfere in technical matters, but who had the duty of defending the interests of the treasury and was given judicial power in respect of offenders, whoever they might be. The theft of ore, in particular, was very heavily punished.

It is probable that regulations similar to that of Aljustrel were applied in all the mines thus conceded and that they contained equally severe conditions, the financial needs of the Emperors constraining them to neglect no possibility of adding to their resources.

The writers of the period, Pliny the Elder in particular, have left us more or less complete lists of the mines and quarries which were still exploited in their day.

As in the time of Caesar, iron came from Gaul, especially from what are to-day known as Périgord and Berry; the Isle of Elba seemed inexhaustible; Noricum and Pannonia and the districts now known as Northumberland and Sussex in England and Bosnia in the Balkans, also yielded ores which were held in esteem. Veritable mountains of loadstone were reported in the Cantabrian Pyrenees.

The Cassiterides practically retained the monopoly of the production of tin, the deposit in Gaul at the place now called Vaulry, on the western border of the central massif, furnishing but a small amount.

The two centres for the extraction of copper in the middle phase of the Empire were Cyprus—which was marvellously rich—and Mouzaïa, in present-day Algeria, but this metal was also found in the mountains of the region about Lyons (Chessy), in the valley of the Tarn and on the eastern flank of the Vosges (Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines).

Lead was exploited in Gaul (Mont Lozère, Rouergue and Savoy), in Brittany, where it rose to the surface of the ground, in Cappadocia, and above all in Baetica, where certain mines, were able to send away as much as 400,000 lbs. annually.

The precious metals, gold and silver, were the object of impassioned search under the Empire. Laurium being

apparently nearly exhausted of its supply, silver was obtained chiefly from Spain, where mines abounded in certain districts, and from Transylvania. Gold was found in quartz form in the waters of the Tagus and the Po, and also in the rivers of Thrace, but it was chiefly extracted from the rocks and the light soil of Dalmatia, Dacia, Spain (the Asturias and Galicia), and Egypt, where the placers of Myos Hormos had a legendary reputation.

Sulphur was derived from the Aeolian isles and from the neighbourhood of Naples, where the operation of refining was also carried out; bitumen from Judea and the Syrian coast; alum from Cyprus, Spain, Armenia, Macedonia, and Sardinia. Marble came from all the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, from the district of Carrara, and from the confines of Liguria and Etruria. The majority of the deposits which had been celebrated at the end of the Republic continued to produce beautiful specimens. The methods of extraction hardly varied. "What locality has not its special marble?" asked Pliny the Elder.

Arabia was rich in onyx and Egypt in porphyry. The soil of Italy contained stones which though less valuable were more useful—millstone, the tufa of Fidenae and Alba, and the various materials furnished by Tibur and the neighbouring mountains, which were used for construction work in Rome. Precious stones, the use of which became general in proportion to the spread of luxury, were brought either from the eastern provinces or from the lands of the Far East which had not fallen under the dominion of Rome. Diamonds were furnished by India and Arabia; emeralds by Egypt, Scythia and Bactria; beryls by India; topazes by Arabia; and sapphires by Persia. Jasper was purchased from India and from Persia, and agate had been discovered in Sicily, Egypt, and Greece.

We are in possession of valuable documents regarding the conditions of the workings of the mines, which were necessarily rudimentary since scientific resources were restricted. Among other writers, Pliny the Elder and Diodorus Siculus collected particulars which enable us to form a general impression of the industry, its equipment and its methods under the Empire.

The equipment differed little from that which was in use

under the Republic and need not be reconsidered here. The galleries were as narrow as in the preceding centuries, and the methods of ventilation had not been improved. Nevertheless, administrative regulations obliged the lessees to undertake work of propping and consolidation. Wooden uprights were placed in position and adjusted at the top : these props were found at Aljustrel together with wooden ladders which were used by the miners. Occasionally, too, waste ore was heaped together as a support for the walls. Some progress had been made in the art of making drains to lessen the risk of inundation, and the rules required that a safety zone should be left on either side of these drains.

No modification had, however, come about in the methods of working. In Upper Egypt, where gold was abundant, the miners broke the rocks by the use of fire or with iron instruments, and then continued the work by hand. Pliny shows at length how gold was extracted in other parts of the Empire. The miners, after having dug shafts and attained the presumed level of the deposit, cut galleries with the aid of tools attached to weighted levers. Unexpected collapses sometimes buried dozens of miners. When the gallery had been carried to a certain distance a fall was brought about by knocking down the props which had been left at various points. The miners then ran as fast as possible from the spot, where subsequently " the victors admired this ruin of nature ".

When the blocks had thus fallen in heaps, a strong current of water—sometimes brought from a considerable distance—was used to wash the debris. " Here again ", writes the Naturalist, " there are a thousand dangers. The slope must be steep so that the water may rush rather than flow ; so it is sought to bring it from the highest places. With the assistance of aqueducts, inaccessible rocks are pierced and forced to receive great beams. The workmen on these rocks are suspended by ropes, so that when one sees them at work from a great distance one believes that one is looking at wild beasts—what do I say ?—at birds of some new species ".

The exploiters of the mines constructed reservoirs which contained at times more than 2,200,000 gallons. When these reservoirs were full the sluices were opened and the torrent rushed down, carrying the rocks with it. The system applied

to the exploitation of gold mines was, with some variations, adapted to other metal deposits.

The life of the workmen who were employed in the under-galleries or even in those open to the air, as at Carrara, was as terrible as before. Not only were they menaced by death in many forms, but they were called upon to exert without respite enormous muscular effort in order to break the rocks, to bore the shafts, to pass the extracted ore from one man to another, and to raise it to the surface—for the hydraulic methods employed in the Iberian peninsula were not in use everywhere.

A part of this miserable proletariat of the underworld was recruited from the prisoners of war or among those condemned to penal servitude. In Upper Egypt, these captives, for whom no distinction was made between day and night, were chained in pairs and as soon as they showed any signs of attempting to take rest they were beaten by the overseers. In order to save adult labour, the administrators gave to children the duty of moving the ore and to women that of carrying out the first stages in its treatment. But there were in the mines by no means only prisoners of war and men undergoing penal servitude.

The table of Aljustrel shows us that the condition of the miners was not always a matter of indifference to the government and also that the lessee entered into contracts with them; it would thus seem that many of them were free men. But the number of these *liberi* tended to decline at the end of the Empire and it became still less not only because a number of deposits had become exhausted and because others had been abandoned in the general turmoil, but also because labour in those mines which continued working became more and more arduous. The slaves, who at certain periods had formed guilds, as at Carrara, had grown fewer in number. Thereupon there grew up a class of workers who retained the prerogatives of citizenship but were tied to the mine, their condition strongly resembling that of the rural colonists.

Like the methods of obtaining them, those of preparing the metals had hardly varied. Pliny tells us that mercury separates gold from all other elements and this principle was generally applied. The mercury was shaken up with the gold in earthenware vessels, all the impurities being thus removed.

In order then to separate the gold from the mercury, the residue was placed in a soft skin bag and the mercury passed through the pores of the skin, the gold remaining behind.

Lead, after preliminary melting, was separated from silver by cupellation

Dioscorides tells us how mercury was extracted from cinnabar. In an earthenware crucible was placed an iron plate containing cinnabar, then a lid was affixed and coal was burned above the apparatus. The mercury sublimated and attached itself to the lid, subsequently condensing as the temperature decreased.

The best-known smelting furnaces of the Empire were to be found in Cyprus, at Noreia in Noricum, and at Sulmo, Capua, Como, Mantua, and Verona. In the same way as there were Imperial ordnance factories, there were Imperial foundries, the metal pigs produced bearing the mark of the sovereign—Nero, Hadrian, or Septimius Severus. Certain of these pigs have been found at Evreux and at Lillebonne. Marseilles was a great centre for working the metals of Spain. Alesia had important ironworks, as had also Lyons. Rhodes manufactured white lead and Delos, Aegina, Corinth, and Tarentum continued to excel in the preparation of bronze. Metallurgy, however, developed in all the provinces in the second century, chiefly prospering of course in the neighbourhood of the mines. In the fourth century it was drawn into the general ruin.

CHAPTER XII

INDUSTRY AND MANUFACTURE

AT the beginning of the Empire the industrial situation was not very different from that of the end of the Republic. It was at first characterized by a period of widespread prosperity and by a continual expansion, which were favoured by the internal situation. Insecurity was not such as to discourage production, nor were the exactions of the treasury so great that producers succumbed under the weight of taxation—nor again were the slaves so few that lack of hands reduced the size of the larger undertakings. Later, the guilds grew up in all quarters: industry on a small scale, which since the time of Cicero had been circumscribed and restricted to certain trades—losing ground undoubtedly in face of the system of slave workshops—regained unexpected vitality and showed for a certain time an activity which spread from Rome and the provincial centres into the small towns. But we have seen how the guild gave way in its turn and how the artisans attempted, in spite of the advantages and privileges which they were given, to evade their obligations; the diminution of productivity revealed itself as a danger, the rise in prices of all commodities—which was attributed on one hand to the claims put forward by the colleges, which had become conscious of their relative power in the general economy, and on the other to the decreasing number of available commodities—compromised the peace of the cities, broke the Imperial authority and added yet another factor to the innumerable causes of disorder already in existence.

It is difficult to say exactly at what period the State manufactures came into existence. They corresponded to a new conception of organization and to a system of ideas which led to a policy of intervention of the most audacious and most bare-faced kind—one which had aleady manifested itself in all domains by significant measures. As a result of the timidity of capital in a troubled epoch, when barbarian invasions, Praetorian seditions and bloody faction fights

were sowing terror throughout the provinces, the industrial concerns which had been formed at the end of the Republic and had attained a maximum of development during the phase of the Antonines had on all sides closed their doors. However much the monarchs permitted themselves to interfere in the private life of their subjects, they had not been able to force the owners of workshops to continue to manufacture so long as the personnel of these workshops was diminishing. The State alone—the Emperor with the complicated hierarchy at the head of which he stood—could, or believed it could, revive the declining economic situation. The more or less disguised spoliations, or, if one prefers to express it thus, the enormous alienations of currency which it practised with ever more dubious legality, placed considerable resources at its disposal. It did not lack workmen, for it could always seize a certain number of barbarians at the frontier or—as was the current practice in the fourth century—condemn the vagabonds and beggars to forced labour: unsatisfactory hands, it is true; but rigorous discipline succeeded in keeping them at their duties—or rather in official servitude.

Moreover, these manufactures were indispensable to the Empire. If they had not been started at various points the Empire would have been held to ransom by the free artisans who would have endeavoured to recover the vexatious taxes imposed upon them: the edict of 301 proves what difficulty the officials found in collecting the normal estimated expenditure and later the extraordinary expenditure. Above all, the Empire, in order to clothe and equip its legions and its German auxiliaries—the permanent army expanded incessantly as the frontier became more threatened—was obliged to have its own resources. It manufactured cloth and shields just as it minted money. Other manufactures, including such as were not required to meet immediate military requirements alone, were brought into existence at specially chosen points of high industrial repute. These—above all the purple factories—were destined to exercise monopolies and to help fill the coffers of the treasury by exploiting the passion for luxury which had taken root in all classes of society and in the end became a veritable madness in aristocratic circles.

All the official factories in Gaul, Spain, Dalmatia, Syria, and Asia Minor, as well as in the Peninsula itself, concentrated large numbers of workers and staff who in the fourth century were endowed with functions which were not only obligatory but also hereditary. The State was at that time a powerful employer possessing an establishment in every large town, standing head and shoulders above the private industrialists—who were in any case crushed by taxation, their factories deserted and unproductive—with special functionaries, *procuratores*, who in every province superintended industrial activities. These manufactures were but one piece of the huge machine of which, from the third to the fourth century, each part had been slowly forged, with the result that the last vestiges of liberty had been crushed and the springs of initiative, weak and terrorized as it already was, had been completely dried.

Roman industry underwent a marked improvement in its technical aspect in the course of the first phase of the Empire : not that, strictly speaking, any new principles were applied to machinery, but the knowledge which the learned men of the day had inherited from the school of Alexandria was methodically developed at the same time as certain mechanical contrivances which had already been known at an earlier date passed into much more current use.

It is certain that machinery used for hoisting and shifting heavy objects, such as levers, blocks and pulleys, was known throughout all the provinces. Cranes were in general use for unloading ships. Bas-reliefs from Capua and Terracina and paintings which have been discovered at Pompeii furnish conclusive proof in this regard. In the same way, the water-wheels which were of more direct value to certain branches of manufacture and constituted a large part of the mechanical plant of the time were rapidly improved and perfected.

The chemical industries, especially those concerned with the manufacture of dyestuffs—the dyeworks employing large numbers of hands in all parts of the Empire—had made progress which Pliny the Elder extolled lavishly. It was now possible to manufacture blacks, blues, verdigris hues and purples at less cost than before. It was also possible to procure various mixtures, the formulas of which were

no longer a mystery to anybody. Scientific knowledge had also become more precise or given fresh impetus in various directions. Pliny enumerates the marvels which took place under his eyes: his contemporaries turned out, far better than their fathers and grandfathers, amalgams, alloys and soldering work and easily converted iron into steel. They imitated the perfumers of the East, all of whose secrets they knew and exploited.

Even the science of heat had been once more transformed, as is proved by the heating apparatus excavated at Pompeii. In short, the strength of Imperial industry had been increased by a rich store of technical knowledge which was derived directly from that practised at the end of the Republic but which far surpassed it. Its expansion was only hindered by the great crisis of the third and fourth centuries.

The particulars which the writers of antiquity give us regarding the distribution of this industry refer above all to the period of its splendour, for it is to be noted that none of our informants is more complete or more valuable than Pliny the Elder, who lived about the middle of the first century after Christ and perished in the great eruption of Vesuvius.

It is certain that textile production held first rank among the more important industries. It corresponded to a strict necessity. It had to satisfy the luxury demands, to which there was practically no limit when oriental ostentation spread at the court of the Emperors and the great dignitaries endeavoured to imitate the Armenians or the Parthians. This was the industry which maintained its position best of all and its stability is easily explained when we reflect that on the one hand the sovereigns set up factories everywhere in order to clothe the army and on the other that the passion, which became almost an obsession, for beautiful stuffs and for sumptuously embroidered, painted and gilded dresses was a source of regular profit for the artisan class.

Wool was worked up in all the provinces for local needs, but certain wools, the fabrics manufactured from which were held in special esteem, were also widely exported. The centres in Italy were, in the first and second centuries and even much later, Parma, whose togas were sold at very high prices, Modena, whose industry is praised by Martial,

Verona, whose carpets were sent far afield, and Aquileia, besides Tarentum, whose manufacturing traditions were maintained for a long time, her main production under the Empire being clothes for domestic servants.

Gaul excelled in the manufacture of coverings, outer garments and coarse stuffs. The towns whose sites are now occupied by Pézenas, Langres, Arras and Tournai enjoyed a considerable reputation, but there were whole peoples—the Santones and the Atrebates—composed almost exclusively of textile workers, fullers and weavers. Baetica and Tarraconensis were almost rivals of Gaul, and Corduba increased her wealth by providing for the requirements of a great part of Spain.

In the third and fourth centuries, the Emperors installed their official factories in the centre of the districts which had traditionally excelled in the woollen industry. They were to be found at Ravenna, Padua, Rome, Milan, Lyons, Viviers, Trier, Metz, Reims and Tournai, and they were sufficiently dispersed to permit of their influence being exercised everywhere to advantage.

The linen industry was also not confined to any special part of the Empire. Flax was at that time cultivated over vast stretches of land, and skill in weaving had attained a very high degree in certain towns, whose reputation was in some cases handed down for centuries. We find Italy hardly quoted at all by the writers—except for some centres in Campania—Egypt occupying first place. Alexandria, Tanis, Pelusium and Arsinoe possessed factories which used four different kinds of flax and for a long time kept Europe abundantly supplied. In the third century it would appear that their output became less, for Aurelian laid down specific quantities which they were obliged to supply. In Asia, Tralles, Miletus, Byblos, Laodicea, Tarsus, and Scythopolis were still relatively prosperous in the time of Diocletian. In the western portion of the Roman world, the Lusitanians in the neighbourhood of Salacia and Zoelae, the populations of northern Spain about Emporium, and the Cadurci and Ruteni in Gaul were also deft weavers of linen. The Imperial factories were at the end nevertheless concentrated for preference in the east of the Peninsula—they were, besides at Ravenna, to be found at Salona (Spalato), Sirmium,

and Tyre, the latter being set up side by side with an official purple factory.

Cotton, which was much less in general use than linen, was manufactured in Asia, around Damascus and Tralles, and also at Malta. Silk, which was much sought after by the fashionable and was sold at exaggerated prices, was naturally reserved for the highest dignitaries. Elagabalus spent fabulous sums in order to obtain purple tunics embroidered with gold. The tissues of Cos were among the best known at the time of Pliny the Elder, the raw material being furnished by a worm which lived on the oak and the ash, but it was not long before those of Tyre and Berytus (Beyrut) obtained far greater fame. It was, moreover, from the East that the rarest and dearest products were obtained—Laodicean carpets, Alexandrian brocade and those extraordinary coverings for which Nero paid as much as £34,000.

The industry of dyeing, with its increasing technical resources and skill, provided employment in its principal centres for large numbers of workers. Reds, blues and yellows could be produced in an infinite diversity of shades. Dye-stuffs were derived from the orchella, from kermes, madder-root, saffron, gallnuts, etc. Purple, the shades of which multiplied as time went on, formed the raw material for a large industry. It was obtained at that time throughout the Mediterranean, from Spain to the Syrian coast. In vain did the sumptuary laws endeavour to put a check on the prodigality of the prominent personages who were ready to throw away fortunes in order to obtain the rarest hues. The manufacturers had created varieties which were quoted at fabulous prices and yet easily found purchasers. The edict of 301 contains a curious enumeration, shewing that the lower qualities cost from 7s. 10d. to 17s. 3½d. per lb. and the best as much as £187 10s. Cos, Tarentum, Miletus, Nicaea, and Sardis excelled in the preparation of dyes, and Rome and Constantinople paid them veritable tribute under this head. The fiscal authorities soon came to understand the advantage which they could derive from this craze on the part of the local population—or, at least, of the local aristocracy—for tunics of brilliant red or pale violet. At times the sovereigns imposed heavy taxes upon the use of

purple—as did Alexander Severus—at others they set up a State monopoly ; and a constitution dated 383 and signed by Gratian, Valentinian and Theodosius, contained explicit stipulations. From the beginning of the third century, the official factories were at work in the most famous centres of the industry. Some were, of course, at Tyre, whose foremost position had not yielded ground throughout the centuries, others at Tarentum, Syracuse, Salona, on the isle of Meninx, the Balearic islands, at Cissa (Venice of to-day), and at Telo Martius (Toulon).

The manufacture of shoes, which had left the rudimentary stage of the Republican period, prospered under the Antonines in all the large towns. The wealthier classes made it fashionable to wear shoes of all colours and even shoes covered with gold or ornamented with precious stones. Bologna furnished products which were much esteemed and Martial speaks of a shoemaker who became sufficiently rich to offer public games. As to the manufacture of hats, it became very widespread—above all in Greece and Italy where the preparation of felt was brought to the stage of perfection.

Scent manufacture, the privilege of which had for a long time been kept by Egypt, Babylon and Phœnicia, was flourishing in central and southern Italy at the time of the Antonines. At Capua, a whole street was reserved for the merchants who sold attar of roses, but Naples and Praeneste competed more or less successfully with Capua. Use was made of sesame oil, nut oil, bitter almonds, etc.

The rarer woods offered a costly material for furniture. The Roman guilds excelled in the manufacture of beds and chests. With the commoner woods waggons (*plaustra*) were made which were drawn by oxen or mules, and also four-wheeled travelling carriages and ceremonial chariots, but vehicles were rare in Rome itself, where people went about almost entirely on foot or in litters, the Emperors regulating somewhat strictly the use of wheeled vehicles.

Pottery was a large industry and called for the use of considerable capital. At the end of the Republic, the sale of common vases and of bricks had brought in large incomes to certain powerful personages who employed hundreds of slaves. The sovereigns in their turn maintained

workshops which made large profits for them. Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero exploited a celebrated workshop near Ariminum; Trajan, Domitian, Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius created vast manufactures. The princesses and the high officials of State followed this example with the result that the ceramic art, reputed for the regular profits which it offered, received a place of honour. The smaller establishments retained for themselves only the manufacture of fine pieces, in which the more important factories could hardly compete with them. The most highly prized pottery came from Modena, where certain dishes were worth as much as £10,000—at least, history records that Vitellius paid that price—from Capua, Cumae, Rhegium and also from Surrentum, where goblets were a speciality. Outside Italy, some towns of Asia—Pergamum among others—upheld their traditions. Saguntum in Spain produced very ornate services which were much in demand among the rich at Rome. Gaul, with the exception of a few centres in Armorica and the country of the Aedui, hardly worked clay at all.

Glass-blowing had been for a long time a monopoly of Egypt, where admirable traditions of art were handed down from generation to generation. The Delta of the Nile still retained under the Empire an effective superiority, but its workmen carried their secrets abroad and, like the Venetians at a later date, initiated other peoples in their processes. Augustus had some of them sent to Rome, where he gave them a special status. Nero established the first glass-works in the capital. Thence, the most efficient and the most delicate processes spread into Campania, Spain and Gaul. There have been discovered at Pompeii, bathrooms and libraries decorated with stained-glass windows. Panes of glass have also been found, particularly in the house of Diomedes and in that called the Emperor's. The industry had succeeded under the Antonines in producing at such a low price that necklaces of glass beads were common and the tombs have given up to us a large number of ornaments of this nature. Later, Constantinople also installed glass-works to provide articles of luxury for its nobility.

The manufacture of mosaic, as is shewn by the beautiful specimens found at Pompeii and brought together at the

Naples museum, attained a surprising degree of perfection. It was to be found in Rome, Greece and Egypt.

This last country, already celebrated for its carpets and its glass, had a still more regular source of wealth in the manufacture of paper. At the time of Pliny the categories were, in order of excellence, Augusta, Hieratica, Amphitheotica, Sartica and Teneotica: Emporetica was reserved for packing. The rolls were in general 69 or 138 ft. long. 266 ft. were required to reproduce Thucydides, the works of Homer constituting 48 small volumes. Parchment from Asia, particularly from Pergamum, competed with this paper, but it was far more costly.

The metal industries, as we have seen, were concentrated for the most part in the neighbourhood of the mines. They worked in iron, lead, tin and at first copper, from which innumerable articles were made—toilet utensils, furniture, vases, jugs, cooking utensils, hearths, tongs, seats, beds, nails, etc. But when, at the end of the Imperial epoch, these trades felt the same depression as had manifested itself in other branches, and when, in addition, permanent troubles and barbarian "tumults" paralysed communications and hampered trade, the monarchs set up ordnance factories in the majority of provinces. Their object was to enable the legions to be armed on the spot rather than await the arrival of convoys which ran the risk of being intercepted. By the side of the private factories at Toledo, which supplied Spain, official factories were set up for Gaul at Arles, Reims and Trier; for the Balkan peninsula at Thessalonica and Hadrianopolis (Adrianople); and for the East at Nicomedia, Damascus, Edessa, Caesarea and Antioch.

In the second half of the fourth century, the Imperial factories had, if not completely brought into their own hands, at least concentrated to a large extent two of the great industries—textiles and metal-working. This development was revealed in its full amplitude, for the State left to the private workshops only such manufactures as played a secondary role.

CHAPTER XIII

TRADE

COMMERCIAL activity, which was intense at the beginning of the Empire, declined enormously in the final phase. The fruitful relations which the large centres of the interior had established with one another and with the barbarian countries beyond the territory of Rome—even to the Far East—were broken down by the invasions and seditions, whilst the rigorous measures of taxation which were imposed by the sovereigns added to the discouragement of all who took part in this trade. For two hundred years, commerce on a large scale had been practised between Rome—which remained the supreme market of the civilized world—and the entrepôts which were dotted over the provinces as far as the frontiers. Regular convoys brought in at huge expense the costly foodstuffs on which the luxury-ridden aristocracy lavished its wealth. Numerous and well-provisioned relays received the caravans which travelled for thousands of miles in order to bring rare essences, gems and fine tissues to the fashionable men and women of the Peninsula. Then the roads became unsafe and deteriorated ; public fortune—and with it the wealth of the ruling class—declined in every generation, and the countries into which, for centuries, Italian and Greek merchants had penetrated were closed to the envoys of Rome. The creation of Constantinople, which attempted to rival the city of the Tiber in sumptuousness, did not succeed in reviving trade or in restoring the great currents which had come into existence long before the time of Augustus, and had gathered strength under Nero and Vespasian. The financial demands of the State, which multiplied both direct and indirect taxes, and continuously increased the *chrysargyron* and the *portoria*, together with the prohibitions and regulations which the Government introduced, contributed to put an end to commercial transactions. They fell automatically to a minimum, the professional classes which had hitherto lived by them being crushed under the weight of a terrible tyranny.

Although at rare moments of Imperial history the Roman world suffered from crises of over-production, they were infinitely more restricted than those of contemporary Europe. They hardly affected other interests than those connected with the culture of the vine and it is on record that Domitian, in order to remedy the slump in the wine trade which took place during his reign, ordered the destruction of half the vines of the provinces. These periods of depression never visited industry. On the contrary, it always suffered from under-production, which became increasingly characteristic as the third century progressed. We are aware of the reason for the considerable slowing-down of manufacture, in spite of the installation of official workshops—it was the lack of slave hands, for which free labour was unable entirely to compensate, which was partly responsible for this general weakness, but political circumstances and the economic and fiscal regime of the time incessantly tended to aggravate it.

Commerce was not in possession of any greater freedom than industry. Although the increase in prices became universal at the end of the third century and although the edict of 301 contained very detailed prescriptions, that document was not directed solely against the artisans but necessarily struck at the middlemen, who for four hundred years had formed a very numerous class.

The edict attempted, though without much success, to put a brake on the rapacity of those who tried to sell at too high prices, but it was ineffective in regard to those who refused to sell at all. As it imposed insupportable conditions upon the citizens whose business it was to provide for the needs of the public and as it professed to regulate prices without touching the system which itself made prices higher, it was doomed in advance to sterility. Any law imposing a maximum presupposes and indeed calls for a total revision of the economic structure, and the emperors were afraid even to consider the possibility of such a revision. In consequence the edict of 301 only succeeded in diminishing trade still further by bringing the traders to complete despair.

When we read through the Imperial constitutions of the last two centuries of the epoch which we are considering,

we are confronted by a constant succession of new prohibitions. In subsequent pages the reader will find some particulars of the customs system. Official intervention was not only used to prevent the owners of foodstuffs from combining. It forbade persons belonging to certain social categories to purchase with the object of resale—doubtless in order to maintain members of the ruling class in the splendour of their dignity. An enactment published by Gratian, Valentinian, and Theodosius was not content merely to proclaim the manufacture of purple an official monopoly but also made a monopoly of the sale of fabrics dyed with *blatta*, *oxyblatta* and *hyacinthina*—"If anyone have intent to sell the fruit of the *murex*, let him know that if he do so he risks his fortune and his head." By the side of this monopoly measure, which is comprehensible on the ground of fiscal requirements, other commercial monopolies were instituted. Only the Count of Commerce might introduce silk into the Empire. Furthermore, from various economic considerations the Government restricted to a minimum the facilities for export. It was forbidden to take into the barbarian countries, either for personal use or for trading purposes, wine, oil, or other liquids (constitution of Valens and Gratian). Other prohibitions of the same kind had already been put into force in respect of arms and gold. Thus the liberty of the trader was attacked from all sides and it must also be mentioned that the Greek traders, who represented a particularly active element, were at one time authorized to reside in a particular province and at another time expelled—with the result that this permanent state of insecurity finally killed their initiative. The reader will understand why trade, after having made such brilliant progress, was in the end exposed to irremediable decline.

During the period of splendour, large commercial centres were numerous in the Empire. Rome attracted to her great arcaded fora merchandise from the extreme west as from the extreme east of her territory. She was obliged to satisfy the requirements of her enormous population and above all the caprices of a plutocracy, which nothing could deter. She also received precious articles which her traders then carried into the length and breadth of Italy.

Naples, Capua, Modena, Aquileia and Bologna and the ports of Puteoli and Ostia were, after Rome, the principal markets. In Gaul, we hear of Bordeaux, Lyons, and Arles, which received the corn of Aquitania and of Dauphiny ; Narbonne, which like Arles had helped to dispossess Marseilles and sent the products of the south by way of the Rhône and the Saône as far as Belgium and England ; Toulouse, Nîmes, Chalon-sur-Saône, Alesia, Bourges, and Orleans, where great annual fairs were held and where grain, coarse and fine fabrics, cattle and arms were concentrated. In Spain there were Carthago Nova (Cartagena), Gades (Cadiz) and Malaga in the south, Emporium and Tarragona in the north. Alexandria, whose port as we shall see remained one of the greatest of the Imperial world, handled a large part of the eastern trade and was even hardly affected by the subsequent competition of Constantinople. Corinth monopolized the trade of Greece. That of Asia was distributed between a large number of towns : Antioch, Ephesus, Smyrna—which came into prominence in the second century—Sidon, Tyre, Gaza, Laodicea, Cyzicus, Trapezus, and Caesarea. African trade, which was active until the time of Theodosius, was mainly distributed among the cities of eastern Numidia—Sicca Veneria, Hadrumetum, Timgad (Thamuga) and Lambese.

With this internal trade was closely bound up the foreign trade, which served much less to provide subsistence or meet current requirements than to supply the demand for luxuries. In our own day we import from far-away countries the raw materials requisite for our industries, foodstuffs which we are unable to obtain in the home markets and are of daily use, cheap corn and meat. The Roman world bought from the countries dispersed round its boundaries—which it had been unable or had not wished to subjugate—articles which were only demanded by the ruling class and were beyond the means of the mass of the people on account of the costs of transport and customs. Very large sums of money left the Empire annually ; its gold went to enrich Hindus and Arabs, who gave in exchange vegetable and mineral products, of which they had the virtual monopoly. Pliny the Elder assessed at £4,000,000 the tribute which the Romans paid under this head to the peoples of the East.

The stream of trade which had come into existence between the centre of the Empire and Asia, followed several routes. One of them passed from the Black Sea to the Caspian Sea then followed the river Oxus and crossed Bactria. The other left the Syrian coast and, passing through the town of Palmyra, which in the second century attained an extraordinary degree of importance, reached Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf. Charax, on the Tigris, was one of the most frequented halting-places. But merchandise was also frequently sent by sea. Augustus endeavoured to destroy the monopoly of the Arabs who had succeeded in getting into their own hands the maritime trade between Egypt and India on the one hand and between Egypt and what is now Zanzibar on the other. He destroyed their great port, Adane (Aden), but their power was not seriously attacked until differential dues were established, which shut out their ships from the Egyptian ports.

Arabia also sent to Rome—whether relations were strained or not—frankincense, gums, precious stones, and aloes. The transport of these was extremely costly, the price of a camel-load from the Arabian Gulf to Gaza on the Mediterranean coast, passing through Petra, averaging not less than £30. Persia also sent gems and rare essences. India, whose great entrepôts were strewn along the coast of Malabar and the Gulf of Cambay (the principal one was Barygaza), sold her spices to the wealthy traders who visited her from time to time and made large profits by speculating on the vanity and the gluttony of the Roman aristocracy. It is true that they introduced into India wines, metals and also purple, but these exports from Roman territory were far from compensating for the imports. Traders entered China by the land route but also arrived in the southern region, at the mouths of the Yang-tse-Kiang, after long sea voyages. The kingdom of Cettigara was celebrated in the second century for the sumptuousness of its silks. Marcus Aurelius had already dispatched an ambassador thither, and proof that southern Asia and the Far East were anxious to establish friendly relations with the western world is furnished by the fact that a King of Ceylon (Taprobane) sent a mission to Rome. These relations had been created by trade. But the field of commercial activities

had extended remarkably in every direction. The Cimbric peninsula, Scythia, and even eastern Germany—with its amber deposits—were laid under contribution. Ethiopia, through the intermediary of Greek agents, sold ivory to Alexandria. The markets of the Syrtes were frequently visited by caravans from the oases of the Sahara, Bilma, Siut, etc., and even from the immense region of the Sudan. Rome had attracted to herself the produce of three continents and for two hundred years and more after the foundation of the Empire the convoys followed the paths which led from the Barbarian countries to the Mediterranean basin, maintaining a permanent link between the subjects of the Caesars and the populations which, in Africa, Europe, and Asia, had escaped their rule. The economic sphere of influence of Rome covered an immense surface and no commercial rivalry came to destroy the centralizing influence of the capital. This single domination did not, however, last, for it was broken by the invasions and before long the Roman world was divided into watertight compartments.

The organization of the *portoria* or customs, by strictly separating, within the territory of the Empire, large districts by means of imaginary lines, had already consolidated the divisions made for fiscal purposes. So long as the pretensions of the treasury remained moderate, these *portoria*, although increasing the cost of such goods as had to cross several provinces, did not check trade : they were, however, incessantly increased and in the end amounted to virtual measures of prohibition. Even in the time of Pliny the Elder they doubled the price of articles arriving from central Asia and in the fourth century the tariffs in every zone were multiplied by four and five.

We have seen that the *portoria* had existed from a very early date and that they had always helped to swell the treasury. Their main purpose was to provide resources for the bureaucracy, but they also tended to reserve to subjects of the Empire advantages in certain kinds of trade—differential tariffs were for instance introduced in favour of Egyptians as against Arabs and Indians. Augustus had already increased the amount of the duties. Nero had intended to abolish them completely ; he maintained them, however, and several of his successors increased

them. Alexander Severus made some reductions, but as a general rule there was a continuous increase during the Imperial epoch.

The customs tariffs contained highly detailed classifications and specializations and certain of the documents which have reached us—the tariff of Commodus for wares from the East and that of Zarau in Africa, dated 202—are highly indicative in this respect. Nevertheless it is not possible to reconstruct with complete accuracy of detail the system which was employed, for the tariffs levied in certain districts are not known.

Towards the time of the Antonines, the Empire was subdivided into ten provinces besides Italy. They were :—

1. Sicily.—The rate was 5% and the principal customs houses were at Lilybaeum (Marsala), Drepanum, Panormus, Messana and Syracuse.

2. Spain.—Merchandise paid 2% on entering.

3. Gaul (Quadragesima Galliarum).—This included in fact the three Gauls and the two Germanies. Its frontiers on the south-west and south-east were the Pyrenees and Alps and detachments of excisemen, *portitores*, who opened all bales and had the right of confiscation, were permanently installed at all the passes of the two ranges. The central office was at Lyons, where a large number of officials were employed. There were also high officials outside this fiscal capital—a prefect at Metz and a procurator at Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges (for the sake of simplicity, the modern names are used). The principal receiving offices were those at the places now called Arles, Gilly-sur-Isère, Avigliana, Saint-Maurice-en-Valais, Mayenfeld, Zürich, Elne and Nîmes. Certain exemptions were conferred upon the Germanic districts in which the legions were encamped. All merchandise which crossed the administrative frontier of Gaul paid 2%.

4. Britain.—Particulars are lacking.

5. Illyricum, including Dacia, Moesia, Pannonia, Rhaetia and Noricum. It is believed that the duty amounted to 5%. The customs stations known were at Larix, Loncium, Atrans, Sirmium, Tierna, Nicopolis and Aescus.

6. Asia.—The duty was 2½%.

7. Bithynia, Pontus, and Paphlagonia.—The duty was 2%.

8. Syria.—From the coast to the Euphrates.

9. Egypt.—The Ptolemies had already set up a very rigorous customs system. It only remained for the Romans to maintain it, with improvements at certain points. The writers of the Imperial epoch mention the two customs houses of Syene and of Leuke-Kome on the Red Sea.

10. Africa.—The province was of enormous extent.

11. Italy.—After the time of Caesar only luxury products were dutiable.

It will be noted that the tariffs of several of these districts, and not the least important, have not come down to us. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that the rate of 5% was exceeded in any one during the first phase of the Empire. During the last, the duties were as high as $12\frac{1}{2}$% and 25%. A constitution of Valens, Valentinian, and Gratian says "Let none be allowed to pay less than one-eighth".

As regards the collection of the duties, this was at all events from the time of Septimus Severus carried out for the most part by State officials; even in the fourth century the collection of a few isolated taxes was still leased to the publicans' syndicates, but the tax-farmers, whose prestige had greatly decreased since the last years of the Republic, were far from realizing the enormous profits which had been reaped by their predecessors from the time of the Gracchi to that of Caesar.

CHAPTER XIV

SEA ROUTES

THE development of navigation was proportionate to that of trade and to the security of the seas; it declined when commerce grew more restricted and the pirates, taking advantage of the division and weakening of the Empire, resumed their sway in certain regions. For the war and police fleets which were stationed at Misenum and at Ravenna and the squadrons whose stations were Aquileia and Fréjus did not survive—any more than did the old organization of the legions—the repeated blows of the third and fourth centuries.

Knowledge of the world spread widely during this period. Pomponius Mela, although he assigned to the coast of Asia both an inordinate length and an incorrect outline, brought together, nevertheless, some important particulars as to the eastern part of the Roman world and some rather more vague notions regarding India, Parthia, and Scythia. The writings of Pliny the Elder speak of the Arabian Sea and the Ethiopian coast: Tacitus, in his *Agricola*, describes Britain, around which the fleet of Agricola had sailed, discovering the Orkneys and the Isle of Man. The *Annals* show us the Catti installed in the Germanic background. The *Histories* devote an interesting chapter to the Jordan and the Dead Sea, the special character of which had already been realized.

The curiosity shown by the Romans of this epoch for all matters relating to the configuration of the continents and above all for the structure of the coasts brought them valuable information. Heads of detachments with their armed troops pushed forward as far as Fezzan, the Molouya and the Guir (I again use the modern names) in what is now Morocco: Nero sent two centurions to seek the sources of the Nile and they mounted the great river—fall by fall—as far as 800 miles to the south of Meroë. The voyage about the Erythraeum Mare, accomplished by Arrian, shows that the Red Sea was much frequented in

the first century. The navigator left Berenice, followed the Ethiopean coast, passed the strait of Bab el Mandeb, doubled Cape Guardafui, then known as the promontory of Aromata, and continued his journey. The Arabian coast of the same sea was followed by the ships from Alexandria en route for the Persian Gulf or for the shores of India, where Muziris (Mangalore near Goa) seems to have been one of the best entrepôts. Arrian of Nicomedia circumnavigated the Euxine in the reign of Hadrian; Ptolemy, in the second century, prepared a famous map which showed Malacca (the Golden Chersonese), Singapore, Java, Sumatra, etc. A strong wind had even driven a vessel as far as Zanzibar. The geographical knowledge of the ancients increased notably under the Empire at the same time as the sea routes, especially those of the East, were developed and became regular in the Indian Ocean as a result of the discovery of the monsoons.

There were still many hindrances to navigation. It remained interrupted from November to March; it was suspended as often as not at night—except in the Mediterranean and in the neighbourhood of Greece, where the sailors had at length become adequately acquainted with the shores. As far as possible navigators endeavoured to hug the coasts and it was consequently only by making numerous detours and risking shipwreck on the reefs that one could accomplish the long and dangerous passage from Egypt or Arabia to Malabar. In the time of Claudius a freedman, whose duty it was to collect the taxes from the syndicates which exploited the coast of Arabia, was carried by the monsoon to Taprobane (Ceylon). Do we owe to this the first revelation of the rules governing the winds—rules which were for the future to be used as a matter of course by Egyptian captains—or is it to be credited to the trader Alexandrinus Hippalus? Whichever it may be, the fact remains that from that time voyages in the Indian Ocean became much less hazardous. About six months was reckoned for the passage from Berenice to Malabar, a call being made at Ocelis (Moka in the Yemen).

Thus a line of navigation was created in one of the parts of the eastern world least known to the Romans. But the seas which it traversed were far from being completely

safe and the precaution was taken of carrying archers on board. Pirates scoured the Indian Ocean and also certain parts of the Atlantic.

Various writers have left us particulars of the usual length of time taken in voyages between the principal ports of the Mediterranean. Communications between Puteoli and Alexandria were particularly active ; the journey normally took twelve days but it was sometimes necessary to reckon with storms and Lucian relates the case of a ship which tossed for seventy days between Malta and the Piræus. The journey from Ostia to Puteoli took two days, from Puteoli to Africa, three ; from Puteoli to Corinth, five ; from Ostia to the Tarraconensian coast, five ; to Cadiz, seven, and to Fréjus, three ; from Syracuse to Cyllene in Elis, six ; from Brindisi to Dyrrhachium, one ; from the mouth of the Tanaïs (Don) to Rhodes, ten ; and thence to Alexandria, four. The coasting trade was very remunerative about the whole Mediterranean shore as also in the Black Sea, where the port of Dioscurias alone possessed 130 interpreters.

The distance which a vessel could cover in 24 hours is reckoned at 103 miles by some authorities and at 130 miles by others.

The ships of the Imperial epoch were much larger than those of the Republican period.

We have seen that the shipbuilders, grouped into official guilds with heavy responsibilities but with rapidly extending privileges and immunities, maintained fleets which were compelled to perform regular services : the feeding of Rome and of Italy and above all the transport of wheat laid strict obligations upon them and the Government kept an eye upon the state of repair and the replacement of every vessel. The fleet of Alexandria, regarding which Seneca furnishes us with curious details, was the largest and—approximately upon the dates which had been fixed in advance—carried out its regular voyage from the Delta to Puteoli, putting in at Malta, at ports in Sicily, and at Rhegium. Commodus ordered the creation of an African fleet, and, later, those of Spain and of Sicily appeared in the Mediterranean.

Certain of the vessels of the Alexandrian fleet, which brought in to their proprietors as much as £2,800 per annum, were, according to Lucian, 176 ft. long, 41 ft. broad and

40 ft. deep. One of them, the *Isis*, displaced 1,575 tons, but the majority did not exceed 400. At the time of Constantine, the latter figure was still the average displacement, and it was a vessel of this size which brought the Lateran obelisk to Rome. It was certainly less imposing than the ship which carried the first obelisk, in the days of Augustus, for that vessel had on board, besides the giant monolith, 200 sailors, 1,200 passengers, and a cargo which comprised 93,000 bushels of wheat, besides other merchandise.

CHAPTER XV

PORTS

THE first Emperors made it their concern to improve the old ports and to create new ones. The very increase of sea-borne trade called for action on their part; it must not be forgotten that although trade in minerals or in heavy iron and steel wares was little developed, that in wheat was essential and, through its close connexion with the life of the capital, controlled a great part of the economic life of the day. This wheat, furnished by Egypt, Africa and Sicily, could only arrive by sea. It was essential that it should be unloaded in safe harbours, sheltered from storms, for the loss of a cargo would have been much more serious at that time than in our days and have fallen little short of a social calamity. Such is the fundamental explanation of the public works which were undertaken in Italy; but, at the same time and along the whole coast of the Roman world where the necessities of trade were making themselves felt and a more highly developed civilization was leading to habits of ease and luxury, navigation interests—above all, those of the coasting trade—were leading to the construction of docks, quays and warehouses and the epoch of the Antonines had almost closed before these undertakings grew less, in harmony with the general slackening of human effort.

The two great entrepôts of Italy were Ostia and Puteoli.

Ostia, connected with the Tiber by the canal of Trajan (Fossa Trajana), served Rome, which was but a short distance away. In the second century it comprised two ports—those of Claudius and of Trajan. The first was circular and enclosed by two large jetties; it was protected by a breakwater constructed on the large vessel which had brought the obelisk from Egypt and had been intentionally sunk. A lighthouse indicated its position to mariners. The 173 acres which it covered proved, however, inadequate, the more so as the harbour tended to silt, and Trajan added

a dock covering 90 acres, enclosed by quays 38 ft. wide, on which were constructed warehouses for wheat, oil and wine. Ostia then covered a space of 277 acres and the total extent of quay was $3\frac{3}{4}$ miles. Its mercantile activity was due in the main to the regular arrival of the Alexandrian fleet which came to discharge its grain in the midst of an expectant population. Unfortunately, in the fourth century, the silt had nearly choked the whole of the entrance to the channel, and in the time of Valentinian III the glory of Ostia had passed.

Puteoli continued in use up to the end, but it was far from offering the same expanse of docks and quays. A jetty of piles was an object of admiration there. Nero had improved the port, and had also caused work to be begun on a canal which was to have been 138 miles long and to have led directly to Rome. Prisoners of war were employed and a small portion was constructed. But under the Antonines, the State was again obliged to undertake considerable works of maintenance. Antium was the work of Nero. Tarracina became of real importance from the reign of Augustus and especially after the canal of the Pontine Marshes had been pierced. Its mole was about 747 yards long. Trajan caused works of considerable importance and extent to be carried out at Ancona and the same Emperor completed the task of Augustus at Rimini. Tarentum and Ravenna, which were for some time prosperous, later silted up completely. The same fate befell the famous Julian harbour—constructed by Agrippa after he had joined Lake Avernus with the Lucrine lake, for which purpose he employed 20,000 slaves—and that of Centum Cellae (Civitavecchia), which Trajan had endowed with a monumental jetty. Misenum, with its three docks and breakwater, was mainly used by the fleet.

Outside Italy, Gaul had Forum Julii (Fréjus), where Agrippa installed a commercial dock by the side of the naval port, Narbo, where the Empire spent considerable sums in a vain struggle against the accumulations of sand, Marseilles, Vannes and Bordeaux. The sea-borne commerce of Africa was shared by Thabraca, Hippo Zarytus, Utica, and Carthage—where costly works had been carried out—Thapsus, Taparura (Sfax), and Oea (Tripoli). Adane and

Muza served Arabia. On the Mediterranean, Alexandria remained the great and sole entrepôt of Egypt and the richest maritime market in the world: on the Red Sea, the two harbours of Berenice and of Myos Hormos—the latter marvellously situated, with a periphery two leagues long, and a chain of islands to protect it—absorbed a very large part of the eastern and far-eastern trade. Seleucia, from the time of the Flavians to that of Constantius, was a centre not only for the trade of Antioch but also for that of Syria, and the Emperors spared no expense to enlarge its dock space by removing the reefs. Corinth played the same rôle for Greece.

Artificial ports were constructed in imitation of natural ports, which consist of a bay or cove protected by two promontories facing one another. Stone moles were built, of greatly varying length, or cement was run into the space between superimposed baulks laid along the site of the mole. Very frequently, as at Tyre, Sidon and Gebal in Syria, the roadsteads were closed by a dam and ships entered directly from the sea by a channel, there being no outer port.

Whatever might be the arrangement of the port, the channel was usually somewhat narrow—at Ostia 213 ft. and at Tarracina 367 ft. The quays of the Roman ports, for which marble was sometimes used—at Ancona, Rimini, and Syracuse, for example—were generally of restricted size, but it must be remembered that the cargoes consisted mainly of costly materials and articles of luxury which took up little space. Perishable articles formed an almost negligible part of the sea-borne traffic, and in consequence the masters were in no great haste to perform the operations of loading and unloading. Vessels could count on part of the cargo space remaining empty.

Alexandria, with 920 acres of docks and $9\frac{1}{4}$ miles of quays, remained unrivalled throughout antiquity. Ostia had 280 acres of docks and $3\frac{3}{4}$ miles of quays, Misenum 245 acres and $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles, Puteoli 60 acres and $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, Tarracina 25 acres and $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, Brindisi 200 acres and $3\frac{3}{4}$ miles, Fréjus 27 acres and 1,000 yds., Marseilles 30 acres and 1,000 yds. Carthage, when restored, had 35 acres of docks and $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of quays.

Lighthouses, though not very numerous under the Empire, shone nevertheless at the approaches of the principal ports.

That of Ostia, erected by Claudius, called to mind the famous monument of Alexandria. The principal towers along the Italian coast were at Ravenna, Aquileia, Brindisi, Centum Cellae, Baiae, Puteoli, Capua, and Messana: in Gaul at Arles, Fréjus, and Boulogne: in Spain at Coruña,[1] Cape Finisterre and the mouth of the Baetis (Guadalquivir): in Britain at Dover: in the eastern seas that of Neoptolemus at the mouth of the Dniester, that of Timaeus on the Bosphorus, the towers of Herodius and of Sestos on the two banks of the Hellespont, that of Chrysopolis in Bithynia, and those of Smyrna and Aegae in Cilicia.

The majority of the lighthouses—whose lights, fed by resinous fuel, were somewhat uncertain—were raised on mounds of earth. Along all the frequented coasts, unlighted towers or sea-marks were also grouped at various points and helped to facilitate navigation. Their utility was the greater in that the captains of the time trusted themselves but rarely upon the high seas.

[1] In order not to complicate this list of names, we refrain from using the ancient names where they are little known.

CHAPTER XVI

ROAD TRAFFIC AND PUBLIC WORKS

THE Imperial epoch, at least during its period of splendour, was characterized by numerous and extensive public works and especially by road-making enterprises. However much frequented, the Mediterranean Sea and its lines of navigation could not satisfy all the requirements of trade and the waterways which entered it could not, even when improved, render the same service as well-kept roads with their innumerable branches.

The Republic, especially from the time of the Gracchi, had followed the policy of connecting the towns with one another by means of roads which neither mountains nor marshes could divert and we have already given a short account of those which were constructed. But the first Emperors were also prodigious builders. From Augustus to Trajan, the treasury did not cease to spend large sums in order to pay for engineering work and to fill the gaps which still existed in certain parts of the Roman world. After having completed the road systems of Italy, of Gaul, and of the Mediterranean area of Asia, attention was directed to the construction or completion of means of communication in other parts of the territory. This work had a triple object—military, political and economic. The legions had to be moved rapidly from the provincial centres to the frontier districts where the barbarian hordes were menacing. The monarchs desired that all decisions should be taken at Rome and not left to the initiative of their subordinates, whose action might have compromised administrative unity and even the safety of the throne. And finally, they wished to ensure adequate facilities for the trade activities which were developing on all sides and contributing towards the public funds. Evidence goes to shew that the latter pre-occupation was much stronger during the first and second centuries after Christ than in the preceding ones, but it never became the predominant consideration, and the works

ordered by Trajan, for example, were intended essentially to guarantee the security of the frontier.

The roads administration met with the same fate as all the other institutions. Though vigilant for two hundred years, it later fell a prey to bureaucratic torpor, indifference and the disregard of elementary rules. The writers of the fourth century describe the roads as abandoned, their surface ruined by the rains, and the bridges in a state of collapse. Nobody attempted to put matters right. Nobody cared, for brigands infested the countryside and traffic had become rare ; moreover there was a shortage of hands to execute repairs and of money to pay for work done. Active life was paralysed in every limb, and the gradual disappearance of the main roads, of what yesterday were the throbbing arteries of a rich and civilized society, marked not only an irremediable decadence but also contributed to accentuate the political, military and economic decline.

We have seen that Augustus made of the administration of the roads a stable and well-conceived service which survived until the beginnings of the phase of decay. He appointed special officials who were called *curatores operum publicorum tuendorum*. The costs of upkeep and of construction were defrayed by the *aerarium* or public treasury, but this special budget was also assisted by the proceeds of the tolls collected at certain points, by the contributions demanded of rich landowners and by the obligatory assistance given by the municipalities. This assistance was given in particular in respect of the Via Claudia Nova, the Via Claudia Valeria, and the Via Trajana from Brindisi to Beneventum. In addition there were the personal gifts of the monarchs.

Although as often as not labour was furnished by the legions, to whose services recourse was had in times of peace, the making of roads remained very costly. The expense was all the greater in that practically no expeditious methods existed of piercing rocks and crossing ravines. Under Hadrian, a Roman mile—roughly nine-tenths of a British mile—cost £1,000. Several historians have estimated, without, however, explaining their method of calculation very clearly, that the cost of the whole of the road scheme

contained in the *Itinerary* of Antoninus was equivalent to £280,000,000.

It is certain that the Romans, who travelled extensively and slowly, were in possession of minute descriptions of the principal routes. Two important documents have come down to us—the *Itinerary* of Antoninus and Peutinger's Map. The first enumerates the roads and includes 372 *viae*; the second, a manuscript executed by a monk of Colmar and named after Conrad Peutinger, one of the persons into whose possession it came at the beginning of the 16th century is a veritable map. It was itself a copy of a much older manuscript, the exact date of which cannot be stated with certainty. It measures 22 ft. 4 in. by 1 ft. 1·36 in. and shows not only the Roman territory during the Imperial epoch but also the neighbouring countries. Thanks to these two documents we can form an approximate notion of the road system between the reign of Augustus and that of Theodosius.

There was hardly a town displaying any activity in the Peninsula which was not the centre of a network of roads. Thus, leaving Rome out of account, three main roads crossed at Como, 5 at Milan, and 6 at Beneventum. The *Itinerary* of Antoninus allots 12,056 miles [1] of paved roads to Italy, 8,630 to Gaul, 7,128 to Spain, 2,387 to Britain, the area of which was very small and parts of which remained almost unknown, 1,261 to Sicily, 182 to Sardinia, 116 to Corsica, 8,652 to the province of Africa, 1,389 to Egypt, and 9,537 to Asia. It may be considered that these figures are low as compared with those of our own days; nevertheless they afford proof that remarkable progress had been made since the Republican period, when the communications of the capital were the chief preoccupation. The work accomplished after the time of Augustus—especially in Spain and in Gaul—was truly astonishing.

Gaul, with Belgica, the country of the Batavi, and the Rhineland, possessed, according to the *Itinerary*, 8,630 miles of main road, but the total, if we add the secondary roads and the relatively practicable tracks, can hardly have been less than 25,000 miles. Agrippa, in the reign of Augustus, had constructed four different roads in the Lyons district, in order to connect the city with different parts of the country.

[1] British Statute Miles.

The first went in the direction of Limoges and Saintes; the second to Autun, Beauvais and the Channel; the third to Chalon, Langres, Metz and Coblenz[1] and the fourth to Marseilles and the Pyrenees. Among the towns thus reached or traversed by the *viae* were Valence, Vienne, Besançon, Vesoul, Strasbourg, Alise, Dijon, Tonnerre, Lutetia, Sens, Auxerre, Rennes, Soissons, Saint-Quentin, Amiens, Boulogne, Senlis, Bavay, Rouen, Lillebonne, Cassel, Chartres, Orléans, Blois, Le Mans, Tours, Angers, Nantes, Bourges, Argentan, Clermont, Poiters, Périgueux, Bordeaux, Dax, Auch, Toulouse, Cahors and Rodez—and this list of names shows that no part of the country was neglected and that transport was possible and easy everywhere. The Mont Genèvre and Little Saint-Bernard passes offered communication between Gaul and Italy, whilst three routes crossed the Pyrenees—those by Perthus, the valley of the Aspe and the Col de Roncevaux respectively.

It was also during the reign of the first Emperors that the road system of Spain was developed. In Germany the work was continued until the time of Trajan, who added to the *via* already constructed along the Rhine the military road from Mainz to Offenburg.

Africa had its own complete road system, the centres being Carthage, Hippo, and Theveste. Each port had a main road communicating with the hinterland and even the oasis in the extreme south of Tunis was linked with the coast. It was possible to travel around the eastern basin of the Mediterranean on horseback, on foot, or in a carriage, Asia being no less well served than Africa. From the Syrian shores as from the Numidian coast, well-kept roads led into the interior. In the interests of economic needs and of military necessity, Trajan and the Severi turned their attention to improving the routes followed by the caravans from Arabia, Mesopotamia, and Persia to the Phœnician ports.

All these roads were provided with milestones. After having set up in the Forum the famous Millearium Aureum —which strictly speaking was not the real point from which the main roads started, since distances were only reckoned from the wall of Servius—Augustus made the use

[1] Contemporary names are used where the ancient names are little known.

of milestones general. The Golden Milestone was re-erected by Vespasian and again by Nero, but it was found at a much later date under the ruins of a suburb. It was another symbol of the grandeur of Rome which had disappeared in the administrative muddle which was allowed to exist. However, during the whole of the period of prosperity the milestones were erected along the *viae* and showed either the distance from a city which had contributed towards the expense of upkeep of the road or that from the chief town of the province.

It was Augustus who organized the posting system in its full extent. Officials were appointed to manage this public transport service, to which the Imperial treasury and the municipal coffers gave financial assistance. The highest of these officials controlled the Via Flaminia from Rome to Ariminum. The posts were not only used by the State employees, but all persons who had a diploma or permit might use them and could requisition horses, etc. Relays were provided every five miles and as many as 40 horses might be in waiting at one of these points. Thus as much as 100 miles could be covered in a day and the journey from Antioch to Constantinople took only seven days in the fourth century, although the distance exceeded 687 miles. Accommodation awaited travellers at certain of the stages.

In broken country there were bridges to ensure communications, even across the widest valleys. Such remains as have come down to us from the days of Imperial antiquity prove that the skill of the engineer did not shrink from the greatest daring. Drusus, and later Trajan and Constantine, threw magnificent bridges across the Rhine. But the enterprises on the largest scale were those of Trajan at Alcantara—where the parapet was 197 ft. above the river—at Turnu Severin on the Danube, and at Salamanca.

The aqueducts rivalled these huge constructions. Though Rome, thanks to her 267 miles of conduits, was well enough supplied from the time of Tiberius,[1] the new cities had to be provided with water, e.g. Lyons which received its water by means of the aqueduct of Mont Pilat, 52 miles long.

[1] Nevertheless, works on a large scale were also undertaken under Claudius and under Trajan.

BRIDGES ON THE VIA FLAMINIA.

1. Bridge over the Metaurus.—2. Ponte Cardaro, N.E. of Narnia.
(By kind permission of the Council of The Roman Society.)

[*face p.* 310.

The bridge across the Gard and that of Segovia counted among the most imposing creations of this period, Constantius Chlorus built the aqueduct of Arcueil (290–306) to supply Lutetia and Claudius that of Fréjus. Other aqueducts served Antibes, Arles, Aix, Vaison, Vienne, Lillebonne, Poitiers, Cahors, Trier, Cologne, Mainz, Merida, Bougie, Constantine, and Lambaesa. One of the last was that which Valens presented to Byzantium (364).

If we have appreciated at its proper value the spirit of initiative of official Rome during at least the first centuries of the Empire, we shall not be surprised to find that an attempt was made to combine water-borne with land-borne traffic. All the rivers which were capable of navigation at all and could be of assistance to the general activities of trade in any way were improved by the administrative authorities. It has been calculated that towards the reign of Hadrian 1,563 miles were navigable to the north of the Po, 663 on the western and as many on the eastern watershed of the Apennines. And yet Italy was by no means rich in waterways. The Guadalquivir, the Tagus, the Douro and the Ebro in the Iberian Peninsula were much used—though less than the Rhône in Gaul, which ran between stone quays at Lyons, Vienne, and Arles.

But not only were the channels deepened and the flow of the rivers regularized : attempts were made to connect them with one another. Nature was corrected. With ends in view which were at times military and at others economic—in order to crush the barbarians more rapidly, to facilitate transit from one sea to a neighbouring one, to bring a district under cultivation or to avoid long detours—the most difficult and apparently hopeless tasks were attempted. This was at a time when the servile population was still relatively dense, and it was fairly easy to procure labour. Augustus had a canal constructed alongside the Appian Way, from Terracina to Rome. Agrippa, upon orders from the same Emperor, connected the Lucrine lake with lake Avernus, Claudius caused a channel to be constructed to carry off the waters of lake Fucinus into the river Liris—and to complete this enterprise, 30,000 men worked for eleven years to make the 3 mile tunnel. Corbulo constructed the canal from the Rhine to the Maas—a distance of 23 Roman miles—and

Drusus that from the Rhine to lake Flevo. Nero, who hardly got beyond plans, projected the canal from Puteoli to Rome, that from the Saône to the Moselle, and that of the Isthmus of Corinth, which had engaged the attention of others before him. But even these works, which were abandoned as soon as conceived, prove the ingenuity of the Romans, their obstinate desire to master the elements, to increase the riches of humanity by making the earth conform better to the needs of its inhabitants. It is true that the last centuries of the Empire, from this point of view as from every other, offer us nothing but a spectacle of impotence, mental torpor and general rot, for they saw the rivers silted, the canals choked, and the roads left to the goodwill—often absent—of the nearest inhabitants. And what, indeed, would have been the use of navigable waterways at the time of great invasions and of civil war ? Why should they have been tended with care when trade was falling into decay and it occurred to nobody to leave his village ?

CHAPTER XVII

THE MONETARY CRISES

THE history of the coinage under the Empire is highly complex and its successive transformations—which were for the most part debasements—are to be explained solely by the financial needs of the State. In this respect the third and fourth centuries offer an extraordinary spectacle. It was principally from the time of Caracalla that the gold and silver pieces were reduced in weight and their percentage of fine metal diminished to an enormous extent. This characteristic development is proof both of the distress of the Imperial treasury and of the gravity of the general crisis, but it also contributed to aggravate that crisis. The coins which circulated under the guarantee of the Crown, and were legal tender, were no longer anything but bad money. The treasury demanded the payment of taxes in fine gold and paid its own debts in silvered copper, which had ceased to inspire confidence in anybody. A state of absolute anarchy grew up in the matter of coins ; it became once more the practice to weigh them, as had been done in the early ages, and, in spite of the most severe regulations to the contrary, they were treated as so much metal. Several Emperors endeavoured in vain to set this disastrous situation right and to restore the semblance of order, but they either failed outright or else their reforms were practised for a short time, to be swept away by a still greater shortage of coins. The whole administration of the provincial mints, imposing though it was to the eye, failed in reality to conceal the disgraceful expedients to which it resorted and the poignant official poverty with which it was obliged to contend. When the State began its career of coining bad money and the medium of exchange aroused, in consequence, mistrust in every quarter, it is by no means surprising that manufacturers, already terrorized by the political situation, hid their products or only sold them at inflated figures : nor it is astonishing that traders, deprived

of any guarantee of stability, organized a general rise in prices. At the end of the third century, these had attained four and eight times their normal level. It is this exceptional increase that explains the maximum-price edict of Diocletian, but he tried to obtain effects without understanding the causes. How could he have hoped to reduce the standard of prices when all factors were contributing to their progressive increase ? And how could he have reduced salaries when the purchasing power of a coin had diminished by fifty per cent between the reigns of Nero and Alexander Severus ? He was faced by an insoluble problem, with which neither the law nor good will could cope.

In the year 16 B.C., Augustus declared that he reserved for himself the right to mint silver and gold but left that of minting copper to the Senate. That body retained its privilege until the reign of Aurelian, who thought it more expedient to suppress it. In any case, copper played but a slender rôle under the Empire—and a still more restricted one in that the coins made of precious metals had become more debased. The coins in use were the sesterce, which corresponded to 4 asses and weighed one ounce, the *dupondius*, weighing half an ounce, and the as, which weighed a quarter of an ounce. It must be remembered that the as had originally weighed 10 and 11 ounces, that it weighed 4 in 269 B.C., 1 in 217 and $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. in 89 B.C. Thus the diminution in weight had been constant. At the time of the Flavians, the copper coins contained a fifth part of zinc. Diocletian created a new small coin—the *denarius*, worth one-fortieth of a penny.

The silver *denarius* under the Republic was worth $8\frac{3}{4}$d. and weighed 3·78 grams. It fell under Nero to $6\frac{1}{2}$d. and 3·41 gr. and under Septimius Severus it was only accepted officially as the equivalent of $3\frac{3}{4}$d. Though it lost weight, it contained an increasing proportion of copper. The amount of copper in the alloy was only 2% under the first Emperors ; it rose to 10% under Nero, 15% under Trajan, 30% under Marcus Aurelius, and to 50% and 60% under the Severi. Still later, the coins only contained one-quarter of fine metal. By that time, all the good money had been exported from the Roman Empire proper, the peoples having trade relations with it refusing to accept the strange

mixtures which were profferred in the guise of money. The Germans, in particular, proved very difficult in this respect. Diocletian endeavoured without success to revert to the *denarius* of Nero; he realized that although State intervention might in certain spheres be exercised without restriction, its power was limited in others by general economic conditions. Constantine introduced the *miliarensis* with a value of 11¼d.; Julian the *siliqua* worth 6½d. and the half-*siliqua*. All these innovations, however, did not remedy the crisis, and depreciation took place simultaneously with the debasements of the coinage. At the end of the fourth century, use was made in commercial transactions of the *Antoninianus*—an alloy of copper, tin, and lead, coated with silver—which aroused so much suspicion that certain of the Emperors had to prescribe the death penalty for those who refused to accept it.

Gold went through similar vicissitudes, although, at the beginning of the Empire, it had taken first place in circulation and monetary unification had been accomplished by carefully fixing the relative values of the coins of Rome, Rhodes, Alexandria, Antioch, etc.

The *aureus*, under Augustus, was worth a guinea and weighed 7·8 grams, corresponding roughly to 100 sesterces. Under Marcus Aurelius it declined to 19s. 11d. and 7·28 gr.; under Caracalla to 17s. 9d. and 6·55 gr.; under Diocletian to 15s. 10d. and 5¼ grams. Moreover, such a state of incertitude existed and the *monetarii* tampered so much with the standard (which was in principle from 991 to 998 per 1,000 under Augustus, Nero, and Vespasian and became 980 later), that the official value was no longer taken into practical consideration. Weighing became once more the general practice.

Constantine created the *solidus* of 13s. 2d., which weighed 4·55 grams, and its subdivisions, the half and third; a pound of gold was priced at £44 and contained 60 *solidi*. At this time Christian effigies began to appear on the coins, sometimes in association with pagan effigies. But it was in vain that the Emperors were at pains to modify the system and the appearance of the coins. They did not succeed in restoring confidence, which had been completely destroyed by the successive changes and debasements.

The administration of the mints became more complicated as time went on. Augustus had centralized it under the authority of an official of equestrian rank and certain provincial towns—Thessalonica, Nicomedia, Ephesus, Tarsus, Antioch and Alexandria—possessed mints. The great Imperial mint at Rome was situated near the site of the Lateran ; the Senatorial mint for copper remained on the Capitol.

Little by little new installations were established in Gaul, Africa, Italy, and elsewhere, whilst certain of the older ones, which had for a time been suppressed, reappeared.

The mint at Alexandria, which had been closed, was re-established after Diocletian, whose name figures on the coins marked ALE. Diocletian also gave the right to mint to Aquileia (mark AQ or SMAQ), and to Heraclea in Thrace (H or HC) ; Constantine did the same for Constantinople (CONS) and Arles (PARL or SARL). Mints were also authorized at Amiens, Colchester (Camalodunum), Carthage, Cologne, Cyzicus, London (Londinium), Lyons, Milan, Narbonne, Ostia, Ravenna, Sofia (Serdica), Sirmium, Sisak (Sicia), Tarragona, Trier, Tripolis in Syria, and Vienne in the Dauphiny. This multiplication of centres in which coins were struck, made debasement of all kinds easy and led to the use of expedients of the most varied descriptions.

Each mint had its procurator and these in turn were subordinated to a Count of the Sacred Exchequer, who was in the fourth century a personage of very high rank.

The workmen of each mint composed the " family of the mint " and were divided into various categories such as changers, cashiers or *nummularii officinarum*, *probatores* or experts who tested with the touchstone the metals delivered by the refiners and placed their mark upon the ingots, foremen, metal founders or *flatores*, and engravers of coins and dies. A mural painting found at Pompeii in 1875 in the house of the Vettii reproduces all the processes of minting.

This " family " was extremely numerous in certain towns. In Rome, this working staff comprised thousands of artisans and it sometimes happened that, demanding improved conditions and aware of their strength and position in the State, they organized sedition. A terrible revolt broke

out at Rome under Aurelian in 275 and was supported by a portion of the population of the metropolis. But 7,000 men were killed on the side of the insurgents.

Trade in money was nearly as prosperous under the Empire as at the end of the Republic. Although the grave and perennial question of debts played during this period a lesser rôle than in the preceding one—for very varied political and economic reasons—, although the abolition of debts was a less frequent plank in the programme of faction fights, and although the last sedition of the debtors took place in the time of Tiberius, it must not be thought that the banker class had become poverty-stricken, any more than it had been in the past. Doubtless, the diminution of agricultural activities and the restriction of the number of small farmers entailed a loss of business. The numbers of those who were driven to borrow was no longer so great but there always remained a poor class, especially in the provinces, where the *annona* was not organized, and in the rich class many persons incurred debts in order to satisfy their tastes for luxury. Furthermore, the towns sought money, even at the risk of having to pay a heavy rate of interest, in order to meet the deficits of a budget which became ever more heavily burdened.

The rate of interest increased steadily from the first Emperors until the time of Julian and of Theodosius. Nor is this surprising: if we wish to explain the continuity of this increase we need not do more than remember the innumerable crises which descended upon the Roman world, from the time of the Severi, and bore ever more heavily upon the economic system.

The price of money was seldom as low as at the time of Augustus. At that moment the conquest of Egypt and the distributions of gold to the soldiers and even to private citizens brought about an enormous circulation of currency which reduced the normal rate of interest from 12% to 4%. But this situation was not to last long. The rate rose again after the time of Nero and the lenders—who were recruited from the ranks of the Senators and in consequence forbidden to trade or to tender for the collection of indirect taxes—enriched themselves with giddy speed. Certain of these dealers in money practised exactions similar to those

of Verres and Brutus—Seneca the philosopher, for example, whose rapacity brought about a veritable insurrection in Britain. In vain did Imperial edicts, those of Alexander Severus among others, draw attention to the ancient principles of law and endeavour to defend the borrowers against excessive avidity. They succeeded neither in restricting the rates nor in arresting the general rise in the cost of commodities. The Nicene Council in 325 forbad, it is true, the clergy to practise usury, but it does not seem that its decisions were regarded as constituting the law. Constantine fixed the money rate at 12%, which might be increased to 33% in certain exceptional cases. Distress was, however, such that, in spite of all these prohibitions, the lenders were able to impose the most arduous conditions and to demand 30% in Egypt and as much as 36% in Greece.

Nothing proves better than the maintenance of exaggerated rates of interest the extent of the catastrophe which held the Roman world in its grip: renewing itself incessantly, permanently exercising its fell influence, sapping energy, bleeding productivity and breaking the back of labour. One by one the vital factors had been attacked. The more the State took the place of individuals in acts which concerned relations between men, the more rapidly did ruin advance. The hour arrived when the general rot, the rusting of the works, the enfeeblement of human will and the decay of institutions were so apparent that nothing less than a brutal and complete revolution could have reanimated and regenerated mankind.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE BARBARIANS

THE Barbarian invasions, after having brought disorder and terror to a climax for more than two hundred years, were to revolutionize history. The great migrations of peoples, which followed one another at the end of this period in all the provinces of the Empire and led to the sack of the towns and the devastation of the countryside, poured hundreds of thousands of men into Italy, Gaul, Spain, and the Balkans and almost completely wiped out the complex, refined, softening and corrupt civilization which the triumph of eastern influences had installed in the Roman world. This savage intrusion of a new element reduced the general level of civilization, the habits of life and the economic system to a stage which had been passed several centuries earlier, but at the time it prepared the way, by bringing about the fusion of the old Latinized or Hellenized populations with the Germanic influx, for a new stage of development.

This is not the place to deal at length with the part played by these migrations, which commenced, as we know, long before the death of Theodosius, but only attained their full development in the course of the fifth century with the forward thrust of 405–406 and the sack of Rome in 455 by Genseric. It is not for us to retrace their vicissitudes here or to examine closely the changes which they introduced into the political structure of the world.

It falls to us merely, in concluding this summary, to shew what was the economic system which the Barbarians brought with them, what organization of labour was familiar to them and what progress or retrogression their coming imposed upon methods of production and trade.

The races which overran the Empire had been for a long time waiting behind the Rhine and along the Danube for an opportunity to make a breach in the barrier of the legions. They felt neither contempt nor hatred for the civilization of Rome; on the contrary they admired and envied the

relative richness of Italy, Gaul, Thrace and the various countries upon their borders. It was their aim to seize the fertile land and the mines beyond the frontier in order that they might escape from the periodical distress which beset them, from the uncertainties of existence and from the unending struggle against thankless nature. Even in their state of evident decay, the provinces of the Empire attracted the Barbarians by such remains of opulence as still subsisted and by the glamour of their towns. Such of these hordes as received authorization to settle submitted themselves to the Roman monarchs, happy to find shelter in a less rugged climate and to escape the pressure of the hordes which followed them and were also marching to the conquest of the southern lands. The invasions represented a forward rush—repeated several times in a century—of the famished inhabitants of East and North, in search of subsistence, pleasures and security.

Southern Germany was at that time covered with immense forests. Northern Germany was a country of interminable marshes where the legions hesitated to advance: there were not even paths. Under the name of Germans, moreover, very different peoples were understood. The Franks were encamped in the region of the Nether Rhine, the Riparian Franks near the present site of Cologne and the Salian further down, along the Yssel. The Burgundians extended from the Main to the Neckar and the Alemanni were to be found on the slopes of the Black Forest and about the sources of the Danube. Descending that river, one met successively the Vandals, the Marcomanni, the Quadi, the Langobardi (Lombards) and the various Gothic groups. Nether Germany was divided between the Saxons and the Frisians, the Angles occupying Jutland and the mouths of the Weser and the Elbe. Other nations and other races were moving about the south of what is now Russia.

These Barbarians thus covered a region much larger than modern Germany and it is difficult to define its exact boundaries. They were pressing upon the Roman Empire on at least two sides. It is probable that the descriptions given by Tacitus are true of the whole of Germany, although that historian can hardly have been in possession of exact information regarding the remoter tribes.

The Germans were in general tall of stature ; they wore the skins of animals and were accustomed to bear arms from an early age—swords, long knives, the *framea*—a kind of short spear—and axes. Their protection against the blows of the enemy was afforded by bucklers, helmets and breast-plates. They were subject to kings whom they chose from among the sovereign families but whose powers were limited. Beside these kings, the warriors elected for each campaign a military chief or *dux* with temporary authority. They worshipped Odin, Thor and Ziu, to whom the priests offered victims. In each nation the most opulent of the warriors formed an aristocracy : they went into battle followed by their clients, who participated in their booty.

When we look at the information of more especially economic interest which is to be found in the works of Tacitus we find that the Germans were peoples devoted to hunting and agriculture. After the first century of our era, we find that they had left the nomadic state—or at least that the great majority of the tribes, even if they had not founded towns, were subdivided into permanent camps.

Slavery was a fundamental institution in Germany as everywhere in the ancient world and free men employed their captives to till the soil for their benefit. By the side of the slaves, colonists cultivated the fields, retaining a part of the produce for themselves.

Industry was extremely primitive and was limited to the domestic manufacture of garments and arms. The exchange of commodities remained restricted to a minimum. There was no regular exploitation of the mines and no traffic in money. The Barbarian populations, with extremely small requirements and satisfied with the roughest food, were everywhere engaged in husbandry, except when they were at war or taking part in pillaging expeditions. The regime was that of collective ownership with periodical distributions—the pasture lands and the woods always forming a holding common to the tribe. But agriculture itself was mainly concerned with the production of cereals and Tacitus informs us that there was a complete lack of fruit trees. The German harvested corn and pastured cattle.

In many respects, the Franks, Alemanni and Vandals,

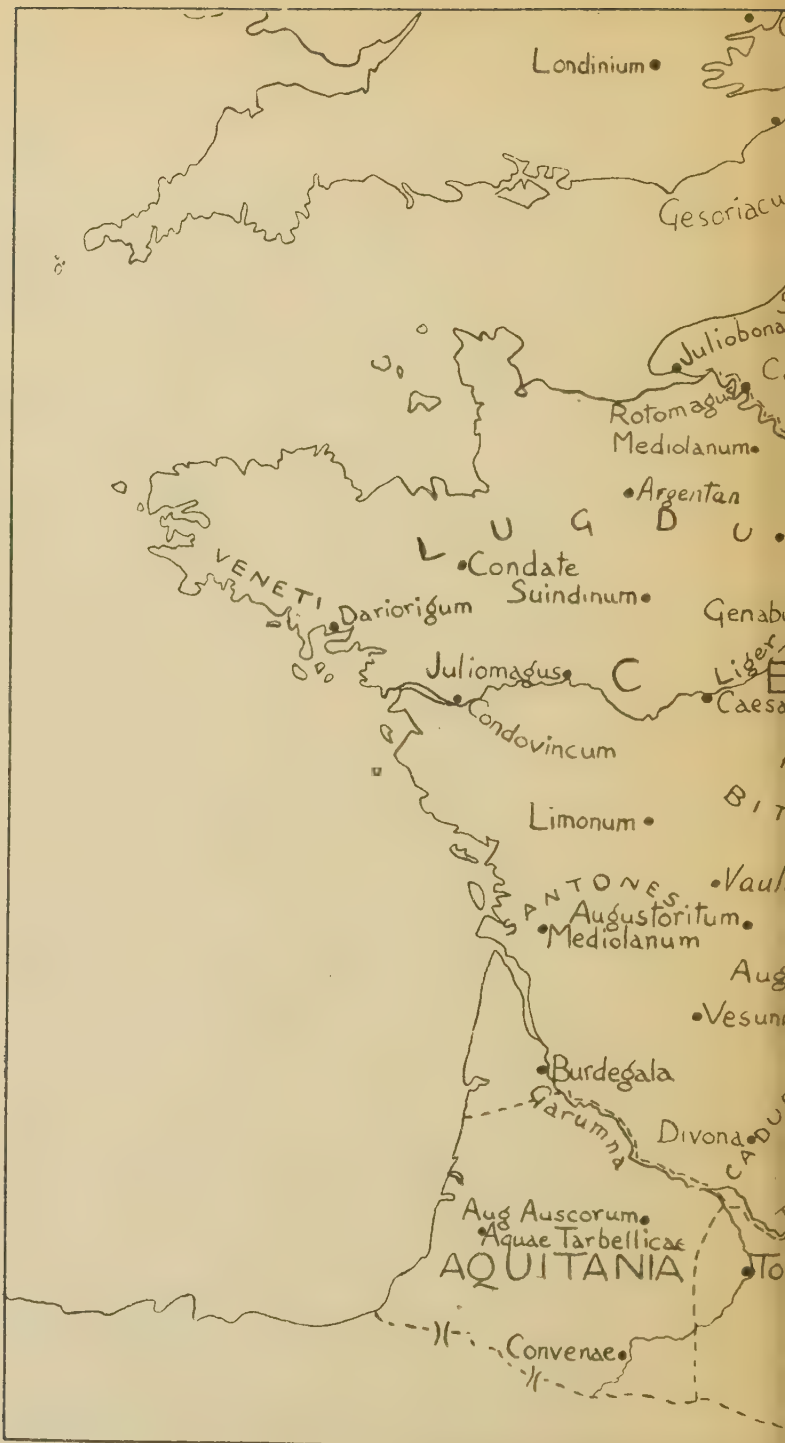
when they entered the Empire by violence remind us of the Romans of the earliest days. Their economy was as simple, their social structure as rudimentary and their technical methods as deficient as those of the husbandmen of the Lower Tiber in the eighth century B.C. They only differed in the numerical strength of their groups, in their powerful military organization—already tested in centuries of fighting against the Empire—and above all in the wild envy which the contiguity of the Latinized provinces aroused in them. With their archaic organization, they only brought into the Roman world, the portals of which suddenly burst open under their blows, younger blood, more obdurate will, the habit of effort and zeal for destruction.

EUXINE
Dioscurias
Constantinople
PAPHLAGONIA
BITHYNIA
PONTUS
Trapezus
CAPPADOCIA
CASPIAN
Oxus
ASIA
ARMENIA
GALATIA
Taurus
Bosporus
PAM.
CILICIA
COMMAGENE
Edessa
ASSYRIA
PARTHIAN EMPIRE
CRETE
LYCIA
Side
Tarsus
Aegae
Seleuceia
Antioch
Laodicela
MESOPOTAMIA
Apameia
CYPRUS
Tripolis
Byblus
SYRIA
Palmyra
Berytus
Sidon
Damascus
Tyre
Caesareia
Bostra
Tigris
Euphrates
Alexandria
Canopus
Pelusium
Lydda
Scythopolis
Ascalon
Jerusalem
CYRENAICA
Gaza
Tanis
Gebal
Petra
Charax
Arsinoe
Arsinoe
G. of Agaba
Lycopolis
Myos Hormos

MAP II THE EAST.

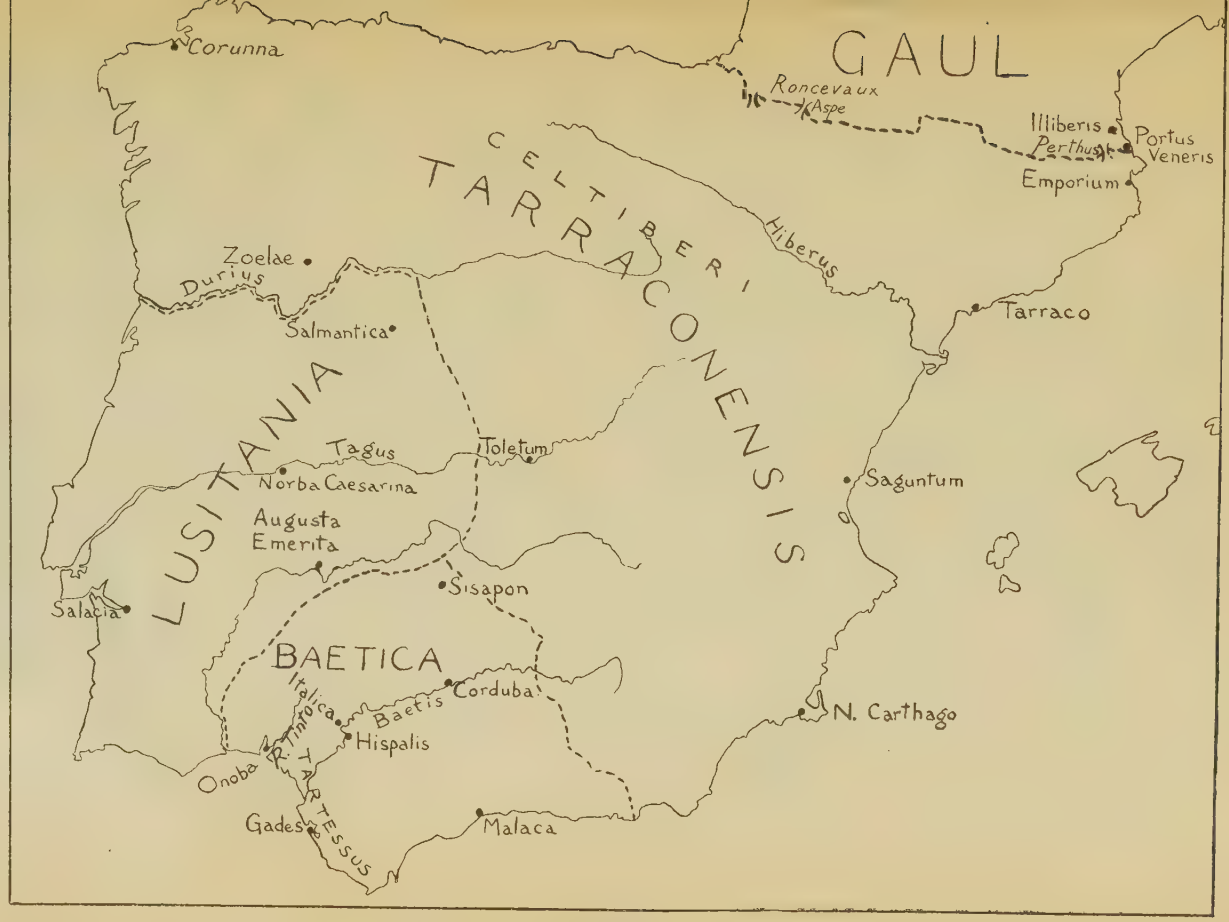
MAP III GREECE AND ROMAN ASIA.

MAP IV ROMAN AFRICA.


Londinium
Gesoriacu
Juliobona
Rotomagus
Mediolanum
Argentan
L U G D U
Condate
VENETI
Suindinum
Dariorigum
Genab
Juliomagus
Caesa
Condovincum
Limonum
Vaul
PANTONES
Augustoritum
Mediolanum
Aug
Vesun
Burdegala
Garumna
Divona
Aug Auscorum
Aquae Tarbellicae
AQUITANIA
To
Convenae

MAP V

BATAVI
Mosa
Colonia Agrippina
Castellum
Namur
Bagacum
Confluentes
Ahr
BELGAE
Mogontiacum
Rhine-Danube Rampart
Mosella
Augusta Treverorum
AGRI DECUMATES
Aug Veromanduorum
Suessonae
Durocortorum
REMI
Augustomagus
Lutetia
Divodurum
Rhenus
Offenburg
Nicer
Argentoratum
Ste Marie aux Mines
Sequana
Andematunnum
Augustobona
Tonnerre
Vesoul
Alesia
Turicum
Aar
Vesontio
Dibio
Bibracte
Pilatus
Cabillonum
Arar
Geneva
St Maurice
Chessy
Lugdunum
Vienna
Gilly
Duria
Po
Isara
Valentia
Rhodanus
Mt. Lozere
Vasio
Gard
Druentia
Nemausus
Pezenas
Arelate
Aquae Sextiae
Antipolis
Forum Julii
Agatha
Narbo
Massilia
Citharista
Telo Martius
Illiberis


GAUL
Corunna
Roncevaux
Aspe
Illiberis
Portus Veneris
Perthus
Emporium
CELTIBERI
TARRACONENSIS
Hiberus
Zoelae
Durius
Salmantica
Tarraco
LUSITANIA
Tagus
Toletum
Norba Caesarina
Saguntum
Augusta Emerita
Sisapon
Salacia
BAETICA
Italica
Baetis
Corduba
N. Carthago
Hispalis
Onoba
R. Tinto
TARTESSUS
Gades
Malaca

MAP VI

SPAIN.

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